

Bavarian News

Vol. 5, Nr. 23

U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt and Garmisch

November 25, 2009

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Giving back

Each year, the Combined Federal Campaign gives millions of dollars back to the community through nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Soldiers, family members and civilians have until Dec. 4 to contribute to the CFC and improve everyone's quality of life.

Tree lightings

This year's tree lighting ceremonies will take place at the Grafenwoehr Px parking lot, Dec. 1, at 5 p.m., and at the Vilseck Rose Barracks Px parking lot, Dec. 2, at 5 p.m.

Don't miss these exciting events.

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Leaders stress it's OK to seek help

Soldiers, families find strength in community

by **ANGELICA MEDINA**
Special to the Bavarian News

U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr has recently experienced a spike in those taking their own lives, and leaders in the community met to tackle this

complex issue, Nov. 13. At the meeting, Garrison Commander Col. Chris Sorenson, along with chaplains, commanders of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment and 172nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and medical and behavioral health personnel focused on ways to erase the stigma associated with seeking mental help, and to identify and remove potential barriers to obtaining treatment.

One well-known obstacle Soldiers and community members face overseas compared to stateside military installations is that there are limited 24-hour services available. To receive medical attention, personnel must check themselves in at the nearest German hospital, where English fluency can vary among hospital staff. However, personnel have two options for receiving confidential mental help

over the phone after duty hours.

One outlet is the on-duty chaplain. Chaplains offer immediate assistance for troubling situations, 24 hours a day. The on-duty chaplain can be reached at 01622-96-0838 or by calling the military police station (DSN 114 or CIV 09662-83-114), which will arrange for the chaplain to return the call.

See HEALTH Page 24

Towering over the competition



Sgt. Levy Robinson, Team Grafenwoehr, touches up a dough replica of the Grafenwoehr Water Tower in preparation for the static display portion of the U.S. Army Europe Culinary Arts Competition, Nov. 13. Robinson was one of 12 chefs who made the USAREUR team.

Twelve chefs rise to top, will represent USAREUR at Armywide culinary competition in February

Story and photos by
JEREMY S. BUDDEMEIER
Editor

After more than a week of slicing, dicing, simmering and sautéing, 12 Soldier-chefs emerged as the cream of the U.S. Army Europe Culinary Arts crop, Nov. 19. In February, the team will compete in the 34th Annual U.S. Army Culinary Arts Competition at Fort Lee, Va.

More than 30 competitors from six major garrisons vied for the coveted 12 slots, but the trail-by-fire competitions, which ran Nov. 5-13, were no cakewalk.

For example, in the Senior Chef of the Year category, participants were given a mystery basket of ingredients and had four hours to prepare a four-course meal for 10 people. In the Nutritional Hot Food Challenge, two-person teams had 90 minutes to create a healthy two-course meal from a mystery basket of two proteins.

During the static display portion, competitors began at midnight and had until 6 a.m. "to get it all on the table," according to Sgt. Maj. Mark Warren, U.S. Army Europe Chief Food Management, who helped judge the competition.

But it wasn't just about the food.

Sgt. Willie Coleman and his team from U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt built a static display centerpiece called "Remembrance," which was dedicated to the 13 Soldiers who were killed at Fort Hood, Texas. The two-foot cubed centerpiece contained a Soldier's helmet and US flag with dog tags hanging from the flagpole — all made from soft dough.

"(Our team) is a lot of first timers," Coleman said, "so hopefully I can bring them back next year and build on this."

Coleman's team of first-time competitors was no anomaly for this year's competition. In fact, nine of the 12 chefs who made the USAREUR team had no prior experience in the competition.

However, this obviously wasn't their first time in a kitchen.

First-time competitor Pfc. William Pelkey (Team Grafenwoehr) joined the Army in April. But with more than 23 years cooking experience, four of those as a cook in the Coast Guard, he can do more than just boil water.

See CHEFS Page 24

Sgt. Maj. of the Army visits Hohenfels Soldiers

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

As the Year of the Noncommissioned Officer draws to a close, noncommissioned officers and enlisted Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment got to see it out with a bang when they heard the Army's highest ranking

NCO, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston, speak at the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Post Theater, Nov. 5.

Preston spoke about where the Army has been, where it is today and where it is headed before addressing questions from Soldiers in the audience on a wide array of topics.

Preston began by acknowledging
See PRESTON Page 24

US, Bavarian leaders balance military and community needs

by **DENVER MAKLE**
JMTC Public Affairs

Of the 41,000 U.S. Soldiers stationed in Germany, half are stationed in six locations throughout Bavaria - Bamberg, Ansbach, Schweinfurt, Grafenwoehr, Vilseck and Garmisch. German and U.S. officials agree it's a win-win situation, and a cooperative tradition that should continue.

Community leaders met at the

U.S. Forces Edelweiss Lodge and Resort, Nov. 12-13, for the Bavarian Symposium, a forum to discuss transformation, military operational requirements, construction, financial and environmental impacts on the community.

Despite challenges, such as noise and housing shortages for U.S. service members moving to the region, Marcus Mittmeyer of the Bavarian

See COUNCIL Page 24

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE



'It is OK' to seek behavioral care

"It is OK" to seek help for behavioral health. As many of you are aware, we are suffering from an increased incidence of suicide. We are attacking this issue head on and ensuring that no member of our Army family is left untouched in trying to prevent even one more suicide.

We have a Suicide Prevention Task Force that focuses our competencies, and we have created a Suicide Prevention Action Plan that addresses our returning Soldiers and those preparing to deploy. Families are included in this effort and our aim is to provide a wider range of behavioral health and resilient services to our entire community.

Our current menu of services and programs available in our community are numerous and have the expertise to

assist individuals with issues ranging from depression and deployment-related problems, to relationships and financial hardships. These are confidential and professional programs and services offered through our medical support, chaplaincy, and Army Community Services; included are our Military Family Life Consultants, or MFLCs.

Please echo the message that "It is OK" to seek help. We must work together to eliminate the stigma long associated with seeking and receiving help. This is a matter of life and death, and it is absolutely unacceptable to have individuals suffering in silence because they're afraid their units or neighbors will not accept their needs. This notion is absolutely not true and we call upon all levels of leadership and friendship to reinforce "It is OK!"

We are also ensuring that the ACE (Ask,

Care and Escort) suicide prevention training is provided to all Soldiers. We are also working to resource our community with ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) trained personnel who have been taught to recognize signs and symptoms of suicidal behavior and intervene to get those help who are at risk.

There are also new Army programs being implemented such as Comprehensive Soldier Fitness. Comprehensive Soldier Fitness is designed to build resilience in Soldiers, Family members and Army Civilians by developing five dimensions of strength: Physical, Emotional, Social, Spiritual and Family.

The 24-hour community hot line numbers are posted on the garrison Web site at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil, and we are distributing posters and literature that also contain points of contact and their telephone numbers.

We all have much work to do and we

believe that 'all of us' can work together to detect and prevent suicide. "It is OK" – another component of being Army Strong!

In closing, I would like to note that Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar and I recently attended a symposium with local host nation leaders to discuss transformation, military operational requirements, construction, financial and environmental impacts on the community. Our host nation partners are critical to our mission because of the support they give us for construction, housing, training, our workforce, etc. I was very pleased with the discussions, and it only reinforced my belief that we are Europe's premier installation to live, work and train.

Stay Army Strong!

*Col. Chris Sorenson
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

CSM CORNER



Winter, Soldier health creates need for vigilance

First I want to give a warm welcome to the 172nd Infantry Brigade and the 23rd Ordnance Company who have been returning from a yearlong deployment to Iraq throughout this month. We thank them for their service and look forward to reintegrating these Soldiers back into the community here in Grafenwoehr.

I ask that our entire community join with me in welcoming all of our returning Soldiers.

This time is a time of celebration for these troops and family members. But just because these Soldiers have returned safely from combat, does not mean we can forget to stay diligent about safety

precautions at home, especially in the coming winter months. While driving during the winter, this is especially important.

One life lost to a car accident is one too many.

First, know the law: winter tires are required in Bavaria, along with a supply of antifreeze and windshield wiper fluid in your vehicle at all times. This is for your safety.

Secondly, before you even leave your home, check the weather

conditions and the temperature so you can be prepared. Weather advisories will be posted on the garrison website, www.grafenwoehr.army.mil, will be announced on AFN radio at 98.5 FM or 1107 AM, and an automated

hotline may also be reached at DSN 475-7623 or CIV 09641-83-7623.

Even if extreme conditions do not delay the work day, being aware of the temperature and conditions is important. Remember that bridges and overpasses react very quickly to temperatures that drop below freezing, and you must always be cautious of ice on the road that may not even be visible.

Always drive with caution and always drive slowly during the winter months.

As we arm ourselves for winter safety we cannot forget about our urgent need to also keep up the vigilance to prevent suicide. I cannot stress the importance of this enough.

Soldiers, civilians and family members: look out for each other. Note changes in behavior and

never be afraid to ask. Leaders: be in tune with your Soldiers and their personal and professional life. Educate yourself on the resources available so you can help when needed.

When you find that you or someone you know is in need of help, the following resources are available: Two telephone lines are available. The on-duty chaplain can be reached at CIV 01622-96-0838 everyday, 24 hours a day, or by calling the military police station (DSN 114 or CIV 09662-83-114), which will arrange for the chaplain to return the call.

Callers can also reach Military OneSource's stateside hotline by dialing 1(800) 342-9647 or refer to the drop down menu at www.militaryonesource.com on how to place a toll-free call from Germany.

The program ASIST, or Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, is currently being used by the military to educate personnel as a form of suicide prevention first aid.

Another training resource is ACE, which stands for Ask, Care and Escort. All Soldiers, regardless of rank, will be exposed to ACE, the Army's suicide prevention strategy.

Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength. Seek help when you need it – help a buddy find help as well.

*Command Sgt. Maj.
William Berrios
CSM, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

Unlocked vehicles, homes may result in action, fines

Office of the Provost Marshal Press Release

Did you know that every month thousands of dollars of personal and government property is stolen from unsecured unattended vehicles in the Grafenwoehr area?

Leaving your vehicle unsecured is a violation of host nation law, U.S. Army Europe Regulation AER 190-1 and garrison policy. A violation could result in a 15 Euro fine by the host nation police and a Notice of Violation (DD 1408) issued to the owner or operator of the vehicle by the military police to be forwarded for command action.

By removing valuables from your vehicle or storing them in a way they cannot be seen from outside the vehicle, you will greatly reduce the likely hood of being a victim of theft.

Recently, the provost marshal conducted an informal survey in a local U.S. housing area in the early morning hours and found more than 40 vehicles with electronic navigation devices sitting on the dash. Many of these vehicles had been left unsecured.

Additionally, many storage areas and garage doors were found open with valuable contents easily accessible to anyone walking by.

The provost marshal has directed the military police and Department of the Army civilian police conducting patrols in all U.S. housing areas (on-post/off-post) to identify unsecured vehicles and high-value items, locate the owner and have the owner secure the vehicle or items regardless of the time of day or night.

Securing your property is your responsibility and the law.



Courtesy photo

A celebration of culture



Photo by Angelica Medina

Left to right, U.S. Army Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios, Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar, commanding general, JMTC, Sandra Mueller, Kalie Jones and U.S. Army Europe's Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Beam cut a cake in honor of Native American Indian heritage month, during a celebration at U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr, Nov. 20.

Bavarian News

Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

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Local area celebrates Fall of Berlin Wall

Grafenwoehr Elementary students stop to reflect, break down the wall

Story and photos by
AMY NEWCOMB
Bavarian News

Grafenwoehr Elementary School celebrated the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall, Nov. 9. The Berlin Wall, built on Aug. 13, 1961, served as a border between East and West Berlin and was a symbol of the Cold War. At 96 miles long and approximately 12 feet tall, it separated families, friends and countrymen.

The first pieces of the wall were opened Nov. 9, 1989, symbolizing the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War. The wall, almost completely torn down by 1991, left behind only a few reminders. A red line was painted on the pavement at the former “Checkpoint Charlie” to mark the course of the former Berlin Wall in 1997, and a remnant of the Berlin Wall at Bernauer Strasse was inaugurated as a wall memorial, Aug. 13, 1998.

Host nation teacher Frau Elfride Kean and several students from each fourth and fifth grade class worked hard to put together an assembly for students, faculty and guests that would clarify the events surrounding the Berlin Wall.

Through several PowerPoint presentations, students explained the timeline of events that led to the division of Berlin, and showed pictures of the wall being built as the barrier between East and West Berlin. Students also explained what it was like for Berliners during the 28 years the wall stood, the excitement when the wall came down, and what Berlin is like today.

“This is a lot of learning and thinking for the kids ... they put

the pictures into the slides with two pictures per slide at the most, and they had to have a sentence per picture with slide animation,” Kean said.

Fifth grader and Student Council vice president Ryan Randle welcomed students and guests to the assembly. She also presented “9 November 1989, the day the wall was opened,” with classmate Haley Connell. “After 20 years, I would be graduated from high school ... it seems kind of strange to be away from your family for that amount of time because of the wall and the guards,” Randle said.

Fourth grader Abriah Batts presented “Berlin today,” which was organized by Pearl Clark’s fourth grade class. Batts was very excited about presenting facts about Berlin to the assembly. She felt lucky to have been born after the wall fell, as well as not having family in Berlin during this time.

“I am glad I was born in 2000, and not any time during when the wall was up,” Batts said.

During the assembly each class was separated into two groups by a mock Berlin Wall. Several skits took place with a student from each side wanting to visit someone on the opposite side of the wall but being unable to do so.

Graffiti posters marked the west side of the wall, which depicted the freedom of West Berliners. There was no graffiti on the east side, representing the oppression East Berlin suffered. Soldiers from the Noncommissioned Officer Academy shop built the mock wall during their day off.

Guest speaker Maj. Jim Amundson, U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr, delivered the closing



Grafenwoehr Elementary Students sit on the “west” side of the wall during the 20th Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall Program at the GES gym, Nov. 9.



Left - Fifth grader Peyton Mansell gives a short timeline of events that led to the division of Berlin to the assembly of students and guests during the 20th Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall Program at Grafenwoehr Elementary School, Nov. 9.

remarks for the program. He spoke to students and guests about being stationed in West Berlin while the wall was still up. “Being an American Soldier in a mostly Soviet controlled area back then and compared to now is a completely different experience,” Amundson said.

For Kean, depicting the tragedy of the Berlin Wall was deeply personal. She had an older half brother in East Berlin who did not know she existed until Dec. 14, 1989. Over the last 20

years Kean built a relationship with her brother who recently died.

She has always shared her story with her students because she wanted them to understand what it was like to live in a country that had been divided because of war.

“If you are free you can do so many things, but if you are not free you are in a cage ... wherever you go you hit a barrier that says you cannot go on,” Kean said. “The feeling of being free is so valuable.”

Czechs forge friendships with US veterans

Story and photo by
NICK D’AMARIO
Command Information Chief

This year the Czech town of Rokycany held its 20th anniversary celebration, centered around their Veterans of Foreign Wars friends who travel here from all over the globe to share memories of World War II Nazi liberation, the fall of the infamous Iron Curtain, and the current peace they have enjoyed with their American friends in the times since.

Rokycany is a quaint and unassuming town just east of the city of Plzen in the Czech Republic — a town liberated by U.S. Soldiers at the end of World War II, and famous for its demarcation line and monument. The monument, funded by the Veterans of Foreign Wars and unveiled in 1996, is representative of the 1945 agreement between the U.S. and Russians that U.S. forces would not advance further east than Plzen — even though Gen. George Patton’s Third Army actually ventured as far east as Prague before being ordered to pull back.

This year’s celebration featured a special appearance by 12 male and female cadets from Vilseck High School’s 18th JROTC “Falcon” Battalion, escorted by the Commandant of Cadets, retired Sgt. 1st Class Mitchell J. Pollock.

“It has been a great learning and growing experience for the cadets as they get to spend quality time with the veterans and civilians of World War II,” said Pollock. “This color guard has been the centerpiece of the annual Veterans Day Ceremony



Falcon Cadets form up smartly in the Rokycany main square after the blessing-of-the-flags ceremony at Rokycany’s Virgin Mary of the Snow Church, Nov. 15.

in Rokycany for the last three years. The cadets that have attended will talk about and remember what they have experienced for the rest of their lives.”

Dozens of VFW members attended the celebration, and U.S. military representation included four Soldiers of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, courtesy of their regimental commander, Col. James Blackburn.

Highlights of the Nov. 14-15 celebration

included a ceremony at the demarcation monument, a blessing-of-the-flags ceremony at Rokycany’s Virgin Mary of the Snow Church, and a one-mile parade led by the Falcon cadets, 2SCR Soldiers and U.S. veterans. The parade culminated in the town’s center where hundreds of local citizens and squads of Czech World War II re-enactors gathered with VFW members, friends and dignitaries.

Even after 60 years, it is evident that the Czech people are grateful to U.S. Soldiers for their liberation from German occupation those many years ago. Whether young or old, Czechs come out in impressive numbers every year to observe or participate in the event, and continue to treat the veterans with the respect and hospitality.

VFW Post 9334 member Hal Hedges, a World War II, Korean War and Vietnam veteran worked with former mayor Vaclav Beneda in 1990 to organize the annual Veterans Day celebrations in Rokycany. Hedges continues his rapport with the current mayor, Jan Baloun, and other Czechs who have supported the VFW since the end of their Russian occupation two decades ago.

Whatever the reason these men and women of the VFW have been coming to Rokycany each year, they are undeniably ambassadors for continued good relations with our Czech neighbors for generations to come.

Rokycany mayor Jan Baloun passed out special 20th anniversary commemorative pewter coins, bearing the U.S. and Czech crossed flags, to attendees at the VFW banquet, Nov. 14.

2SCR Soldiers make history in ‘Little Berlin’

Story and photo by
SpC. JERRY WILSON
2SCR Public Affairs

Troopers from 2nd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment participated in an historic event in the town of Moedlareuth, Nov. 9. The Cougars were distinguished guests at the Bavarian State Government official celebration remembering the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain along the former border separating western and eastern Germany.

Just like Berlin, the small town of Moedlareuth felt the harsh reality of separation during the Cold War as the Soviets erected a large wall, which divided the town down the middle. A portion of the wall still stands outside the German-German Musuem, where the celebration was held.

During the Cold War era, 2SCR was responsible for surveillance of 731 kilometers along the Iron Curtain that included 375 kilometers separating West and East Germany. Moedlareuth was in 2SCR’s area of operation, so it was fitting for the unit to attend this event. American Soldiers patrolling the area nicknamed the town Little Berlin.

“The people from former Eastern Germany (German Democratic Republic) owe our deepest appreciation for their courage and desire for freedom and change,” said Bavarian Governor Minister President Horst Seehofer.

Following Seehofer’s speech, a group of German students from Bavaria, Saxony and Thuringia who recently attended a seminar with American high school students from Vilseck, Bamberg and Hohenfels, discussed their experiences. They talked with their American counterparts about the separation of Germany by the Iron Curtain.

Historian from V Corps recalls days as platoon leader in Berlin

by **DAVE MELANCON**
USAREUR Public Affairs

Cold War-era Berlin Wall patrols were a visible message to the East and West German people and the Soviet Union that the U.S. and its allies stood ready to defend West Berlin and democracy.

For U.S. Soldiers assigned to the former U.S. Army Europe Berlin Brigade, it was a strategic message delivered in tactical terms, said Dr. Harold E. Raugh Jr. of the V Corps command history office during a Nov. 5 ceremony in Berlin for the opening of the Allied Museum’s “Wall Patrol” exhibit.

“Soldiers were expected to fight like hell if necessary for U.S. rights and a free Berlin,” Raugh said. “I’m sure this was the same for our allies.”

The exhibition is one of many events -- several of which include participation by members of U.S. Army Europe, which have been taking place in Berlin in honor of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

“Or mission was twofold,” Raugh said. “First, show the flag; our American presence we would reassure the West Berliners that (we were) there to defend them to the death if necessary. We were there to show the East Germans and the Soviets that we meant business.”

Thirty-one years ago to the day of his museum address, Raugh, a retired lieutenant colonel, reported to the brigade’s 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, and was assigned to its scout platoon. The three-year tour of duty was the 22-year-old lieutenant’s first assignment. In addition to patrolling the Wall, Raugh also performed guard duty at the city’s infamous Spandau Prison.

The second part of a patrol’s mission was to observe and report, he continued. Wall patrols were “low-grade intelligence gathering agencies” tasked with looking for concentrations of East German border guards or Soviet troops, repairs or new construction to the wall.

Any damage to the wall was an indication of an escape attempt, he explained.

A typical patrol consisted of two, three-man crews in jeeps equipped with pedestal-mounted M-60 machine. There were four patrols a week and the teams made their rounds on random days and varied their starting times and locations, he said.

Although the most common view of the Berlin Wall is a 27-mile-long concrete barrier through the heart of the city, there were two parts to the blockade: one separating the eastern and western parts of the city and a 70-mile long blockade separating the allied enclave from East Germany.

Raugh said he and fellow Soldiers used wooden observation platforms that were set up along the wall. Patrols carried live ammunition, but the Soldiers’ weapons were not “locked and loaded.” Although the operations followed a pattern, they were never routine.

“We were not sure what would happen at any time, but we would always try to be as prepared as possible,” he said. “You never knew what was going to happen. It was not scary, but your senses were heightened.”

Raugh said his patrols would observe East German soldiers, many conscripts, manning towers about 100 feet away from the allied side of the wall.

Many did not want to be there, he said. Some would wave their “short timers’ chains” to the passing U.S. patrols.

“We recognized that they were conscripts and they were under control of the Soviet forces,” Raugh said. “A lot of them did not want to be there. We could tell they were under the thumb of the Soviets.”

The wall patrols were one of the Berlin Brigade’s most visible and vital missions, Raugh said.



Lt. Col Omar Jones, 2nd Squadron Commander, 2SCR presents a plaque to Bernd Hering, German-German Museum Association of Moedlareuth Chairperson County Commissioner.

Stellar students dine ‘at the Ritz’

Fourth & fifth graders enjoy fruits of labor

Story and photos by
AMY NEWCOMB
Bavarian News

Vilseck Elementary School held their first “Dining at the Ritz” for the 2009-2010 school year, Nov. 19.

The “Dining at the Ritz” candlelight luncheon has traditionally been held to recognize students who improved the most academically or made the highest academic achievement during the quarter. The school hosts three luncheons throughout the year, giving students ample opportunity to attend.

For the first quarter, 17 students attended the luncheon. Fourth grader Sara Ayoade worked hard for her invitation to the luncheon but said it was worth it. “I had to get really good grades to be invited,” Ayoade said.

According to School Counselor and Dining at the Ritz coordinator Febbie Ramsey, all students at VES have the potential of attending this special occasion if they work hard in school.

“We select new students each quarter in order to recognize as many of our scholars as possible,” Ramsey said.

The luncheon was held at the VES annex, which was decorated by the Vilseck Community Spouses Club. The VSCS also donated the funds for the luncheon, as well as providing the volunteers who served the students and special guests lunch, prepared by cafeteria staff.

The two students selected by teachers from each fourth and fifth grade class were asked to dress in their Sunday best and bring an appetite. They were given a choice of dishes to include soup or salad as an appetizer, pasta for the main dish and a special cake made in honor of their success for dessert.

Each student’s seat was designated by a placard with their name on it and instead of using



Vilseck Elementary students Ihyanna Cruz, left, and Janet Breckenridge share a moment with sparkling grape juice at VES’s “Dining at the Ritz,” Nov. 19.

plastic forks and spoons the students ate lunch with silverware. All food and beverages were served in ceramic and glass containers, a change from their normal dining regiment of using cafeteria trays. Each table was decorated with fresh flowers and candelabra making this occasion a memorable experience for the students.

Students also sipped sparkling grape juice from champagne glasses during the luncheon’s toast given by distinguished guests, U.S. Army Garrison Commander Col. Chris Sorenson and Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios. Sorenson and Berrios wore their Army dress blues attesting to the significance of the occasion and praising students for their achievements.

VES Principal Nancy Hammack and Assistant Principal Becky Balcer also attended the luncheon with students in support of their academic achievements. According



U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Commander Col. Chris Sorenson talks with Vilseck Elementary student Ariana Topasna while waiting to be served lunch at VES’s “Dining at the Ritz,” Nov. 19.

to Hammack the students work hard and look forward to being invited to this event.

“This is a really good way to recognize our students,” Hammack said.

Spotlight on Education



Name: Julie Kerchner

Hometown: South Hadley, Mass.

What grade and subject do you teach?

K-6 Physical Education at Hohenfels Elementary School.

How long have you been a teacher?

14 years, six with DoDDS.

What do you enjoy most about teaching?

Seeing the children enjoy being in motion.

What advice can you give students to help them succeed?

A healthy body equals a healthy mind, so find some way you can enjoy moving and do it whenever you can.

Military families are honored for sacrifices during November

by **GAIL DILLON**
Special to the Bavarian News

It is often said military families should be celebrated all year long, but this month they get extra attention. November has been designated Military Family Month by President Barack Obama. “No one pays a higher price for our freedom than members of our nation’s military and their families,” he stated. “During Military Family Month, we honor the families of our armed forces and thank them for their dedication to our country.”

The Grafenwoehr and Vilseck communities are lauding military families as well, said Cristina Piosa, Marketing Specialist for the Grafenwoher Army Community Service office.

Last week, both the Grafenwoehr and Rose Barracks ACS offices offered free hot beverages and cookies for the entire community. They also sponsored an essay and art contest for adults and children.

The art contest produced three winners in different age brackets: Link Johnson, 2; Alina Salgado, 11; and Barrington Ricketts, 13. Winners received a Thanksgiving basket with a turkey and all the fixings to feed four.

Piosa pointed out that the term “Military Family” is not exclusively reserved for those who are married or even those with children.

“We are all part of a military family,” she said. “A successful military family is one who can continue to think positively and support one another.”

She also said that in this age of frequent deployments and long separations, family readiness groups have a more active role to play in keeping military families strong. “It’s important that Soldiers provide their units and FRGs with correct contact information and updated e-mails and phone numbers,” she said.

Technology, she added, can be a big help as well. “Skype is a great tool to keep in touch with family and friends across the globe,” she said.

Chaplain John Chun, deputy community Chaplain, offered a few tips for military families trying to stay strong.

“My own belief as a chaplain is that it is important to develop a vertical relationship with God first,” he said. “Knowing that God loves us and cares for us first ... means that no matter what the challenges in life are, God promises us guidance, strength and peace in the midst of a storm.”

The second most important pillar in keeping rock-solid despite family separations and other crises, Chun said, is to maintain a “horizontal relationship” with friends and family.

President Obama said military families are doing a tremendous job of doing their part.

“As sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and mothers and fathers are deployed, military families endure with exceptional resilience and courage. They provide our troops with invaluable encouragement and love, and serve our nation in their own right.”

CU 4 Reality teaches life skills

by **SERVICE CREDIT UNION**
News Release

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany – The CU 4 Reality Education Program, sponsored by Service Credit Union, has given Grafenwoehr Middle School students a chance to learn about managing finances and how to calculate earnings and expenses.

The program uses an in-class curriculum during the school year to teach participants important skills that will equip them to handle money responsibly, set and adhere to budgets, and avoid the pitfalls of debt.

The program culminates with a simulated real-world CU 4 Reality Fair, where the student participants create a spending plan based on a salary, and balance needs versus wants, to make sure they are living within their means. Students recently completed the car financing portion of their curriculum, Nov. 18-19. Other topics include check writing, savings, credit cards and taxes.

To complete their course of studies, more than 200 seventh and eighth grade students will meet in May 2010 at the CU 4 Reality Education Fair at the Middle School field house in Grafenwoehr, Germany. They will speak with representatives of auto dealership, cable TV, clothing, food and utility representatives and others to help them understand the many expenses they will face in adulthood.

“Spending money has never been easier than it is today, especially for America’s young people,” said Richard Tolle, senior vice president, Overseas Operations. “Too many students are learning to live beyond their means, because only a fraction of them are learning to manage their personal finances in school.”

According to the Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy, nearly a third of all high school seniors use at least one credit card or use ATM cards. In addition, more than three-quarters of seniors have a savings or checking account. However, just 20 percent of high school seniors graduate with any formal instruction in personal finance.

Service Credit Union and the Grafenwoehr Middle School said the CU 4 Reality curriculum creates a fun and interactive learning environment where students can practice specific financial management skills and learn early on the consequences of debt when it comes to financial matters.

Developed by the Financial Literacy Education



Courtesy photo

Briana Tuininga, Contact Center Representative II, Overseas Contact Center, works with Kaiserslautern Middle School seventh grade students as part of the CU 4 Reality Program.

Committee of America’s Credit Union Museum, in conjunction with the New Hampshire Credit Union League, the CU 4 Reality Program, which is in its fourth successful year, gives students the opportunity to participate in a hands-on event that propels them through the personal financial management process, including career selection, budgeting for housing, transportation, luxuries and more.

At the CU 4 Reality Fair, each student receives a file detailing the students’ personal information specific to their career choice. It includes their monthly gross income and students calculate their take-home pay and create a monthly spending plan as they progress through booths representing various categories of expenses they can expect to incur. Students make decisions about what they would spend on various items such as food, clothing, housing, transportation, insurance, home furnishings, savings, investments, entertainment and credit.

“One of our missions at Service Credit Union is to provide financial education to our youth,” said Tolle. “We hope to be a resource to teachers and work with them to implement these important financial management lessons into the curriculum in our DODDS schools.”

COMMENTARY

Home businesses must follow local rules

by **JESS HOFBERGER**
JMTC Office of Staff Judge Advocate

Think quick: What do Apple Computer, Whole Foods Markets and Hewlett Packard have in common? If you said, they started in someone's garage, you are right. Many entrepreneurial Americans have achieved stunning success with small businesses started right in their own homes. Family members stationed in Europe with their military or DoD civilian spouses might want to carry on this very American tradition and try their hand at starting a home-based business in their government quarters.



Courtesy photo

Beginning a home business while stationed overseas in Germany, according to the office of the Staff Judge Advocate, requires steps that many may not realize.

Before you can become the next Steve Jobs though, keep in mind that operating a home-based business in Germany requires compliance with a number of rules which you might not have thought about. AE Reg. 210-70 (available at https://aepubs.army.mil/ae/public/aepubs_main.asp) will give you the full story, but here are some highlights.

Before beginning your home-based business it is mandatory to obtain permission from the garrison commander. Without proper permission, you could lose your housing privileges. To get this permission, contact the Commercial

Affairs Office at 475-6753. You will be asked to fill out an application for the commander's staff to review.

So what's in this application packet? The answer varies for each business, but at the very least you will be asked to submit a signed letter requesting permission to operate an HBB (home-based business) in your quarters; a signed copy of AE Form 210-70A, a signed copy of the garrison's policy letter number 11, "Commercial and Religious Solicitation," and two passport-sized photos of the person operating the business. The Commercial Affairs Office will help you obtain these documents.

So far so good, but you will also need a few documents which are just a bit more challenging to procure.

At the German Rathaus you will need to register your small business and get a Gewerbeanmeldung for a 30 Euro fee. The Rathaus will then send the completed Gewerbeanmeldung to the German Finance Office and you will receive a questionnaire, which must be completed and returned.

It is highly recommended that you discuss this questionnaire with a legal professional, as it will determine whether or not your business will be subject to taxation by German Finanzamt. This process will also assign a German tax identification number for yourself (called a Steuernummer).

You will need to prove that your

business is properly registered in Germany; this is usually done with a copy of the local Handelsregister. Handelsregister coordination is also initiated by the Rathaus based on your business registration. And finally you will need a copy of any other documents or licenses required by the German government.

Since this is a home-based business you will likely need a Reisegewerbekarte which is a license to conduct a business in Germany without a permanent local office. You may also need a Führungszeugnis, which is a statement of good standing with the German authorities.

That was a lot! But, if you've made it this far, you are close to success. The final documents you will need are a copy of any standard contracts you may use, a catalog or list of the goods and services you plan to offer and a signed statement that you will not modify your government-owned or leased housing to suit your business.

Once you've gathered all that paperwork, submitted your application and received approval to operate, it is important to keep a few rules in mind.

- Almost all business-related income must be reported to both the German and the American tax authorities.
- You may not use tax free



Hofberger

gasoline or a USAREUR plated POV to conduct business activities. For example, child care providers normally may not use a POV to transport children.

- The military postal service may not be used to send or receive any business-related materials or correspondence.
- Business owners may not use their NATO SOFA privileges to import or export merchandise, advertising materials or other business-related materials.
- You may not use Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities, such as photo or craft shops to support your business.
- You may not use any item purchased in the PX or commissary (such as a laptop computer or baking supplies) to operate your business.
- You may not use VAT forms for any item used in your business.
- You may not store merchandise in your government quarters or use your quarters as a showroom.

That was a lot of rules, but operating a legal home-based business in Germany is possible. The first step on the road to success is to contact the Commercial Affairs Officer at 475-6753.

Editor's Note: Jess Hofberger is an administrative law attorney at the JMTC Office of the Staff Judge Advocate.

IMCOM-E postal officials announce holiday mailing dates

IMCOM Europe Public Affairs Press Release

The holiday season is approaching quickly, as are the deadlines for mailing those beloved holiday cards and packages.

To ensure packages from Europe and deployed locations reach their stateside destinations by Christmas, Installation Management Command Europe Region postal operations officials say packages must be mailed in time. See the chart to the left for dates.

The maximum weight allowed for any package shipped through the military postal system is 70 pounds. In addition, the combined length and girth (the circumference of the item at its widest point) of the package must not be more than 130 inches. Each mail category, however, has its own limits, said officials.

Some items may not be mailed, regardless of the season. Alcohol and controlled substances are not mailable items. Lithium batteries may not be mailed, which means customers need to check toys, laptop computers, and other electronic



To ensure mail from Europe and deployed locations reaches stateside addresses by Christmas, it must be sent by:

- **Nov. 27** for space-available mail (SAM) parcels.
- **Dec. 4** for parcel airlift (PAL) parcels.
- **Dec. 11** for priority mail and first class letters.
- **Dec. 18** for express mail military service (EMMS).

devices that might use them. Aerosol cans are also prohibited. Sharp objects, such as knives, must be sheathed or placed in some other type of protective covering to prevent them from damaging other packages or harming transporters or other postal workers. Anything that uses flammable materials, such as cigarette lighters, must be drained before being packaged for shipment.

Improper packaging is the biggest problem

postal workers encounter during this season, according to officials. Despite the extreme care given to your packages while in postal custody, they may be damaged if they are not packaged properly.

Whether traveling by air or by land, packages are loaded into containers with other packages, some of which may weigh as much as 70 pounds. Postal patrons should pack items to withstand

the pressure of this weight. In addition, all box seams should be sealed with tape to prevent water or moisture from entering and damaging your package. Put the address of the recipient directly on the box to ensure that if the exterior wrapping is damaged, the package will still be delivered without delay.

Mailers must complete a U.S. customs form provided by the post office for each package you send. A complete, detailed list of the package contents must be included on this form. If mailers want to keep the contents of a package unknown to the recipient until it is opened, provisions are available for this option, said officials. For this and other postal matters, consult local Army garrison postal employees.

To ensure packages arrive by Christmas, mail them early, officials said. The longer you wait, the longer the lines will be at the post office, and the more expensive the postage will be to ensure the package arrives by Christmas. Shop early, mail early, and sit back and enjoy a wonderful holiday season.

HONORING THE PAST

A local priest blesses the Haag cemetery, located deep in the Grafenwoehr Training Area, Nov. 8, while approximately 50 family members visit their relatives who are buried there.

Descendents of the villages Haag and Langenbruck, whose residents were forced by the Nazis to leave their homes in 1937, are able to visit the graves of their relatives each year. In German tradition, people visit, pray over, and decorate the graves of their deceased family members in celebration of All Saints Day. This tradition continued as the garrison escorted family members of these towns into the training area to pay their respects. Former resident of Haag, Anton Englhardt (top left), visited his parents' graves for the ceremony. When asked how he felt to return to the cemetery, the only thing that remains of his old village, Englhardt responded, "It's always a good feeling to go back home."



Photo by Lindsey Bauler

COURT-MARTIAL RESULTS

The following courts-martial were reported by the Joint Multinational Training Command Office of the Staff Judge Advocate.

- At a general court-martial convened in Vilseck, Sept. 17, Pvt. Richard E. Holmes II, Company A, 412th Aviation Support Battalion, Ansbach, was tried by a military judge alone. He pled guilty to two specifications of being absent without leave; one specification of possessing drug paraphernalia in violation of a general order; three specifications of various drug offenses, three specifications of forgery, and one specification of obtaining services by false pretenses. He was found guilty of all charges to which he pled guilty, except the military judge found him not provident to the charge of obtaining services by false pretenses. He was sentenced to eight months confinement, total forfeitures of all pay and allowances, and a bad conduct discharge.
- At a general court-martial convened in Bamberg, Oct. 1, Spc. Shannon H. Kopp, Company A, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion, was tried by a military judge alone. He was charged with one specification of possession of child pornography. Although he pled not guilty to the charge and its specification, the military judge found him guilty and sentenced him to two years confinement, total forfeitures of all pay and allowances, reduction to E-1, and a bad conduct discharge.
- At a general court-martial convened in Vilseck, Oct. 2, Sgt.

Christopher Brown, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, was tried by a military judge alone. He was charged with one specification of disrespect to a noncommissioned officer; one specification of disobeying a superior noncommissioned officer; three specifications of disobeying a lawful order; one specification of disobeying a lawful general order; one specification of damage to government property; one specification of damage to private property; five specifications of assault; one specification of assault against a military police officer; three specifications of drunk and disorderly conduct; and one specification of reckless endangerment. He pled guilty to all charges except damage to government property. He was sentenced to six months confinement and to be reduced to the grade of E-1.

- At a general court-martial convened in Vilseck, Oct. 16, Sgt. Huber M. Tellezmendoza, 412th Aviation Support Battalion, 12th CAB (Rear) (Provisional), plead guilty to one specification of using cocaine on two occasions; three specifications attempted MDMA (Ecstasy) distribution on three occasions and attempted MDMA use on eight occasions; and one specification conspiracy to distribute MDMA. The military judge sentenced Tellezmendoza to be confined for 17 months, to forfeit all pay and allowances, to be reduced to the grade of E-1, and to be discharged with a bad conduct discharge.

FIRES troopers earn their Spurs, help community

Three-day event pushes Soldiers to the limit

Story and photos by
Spc. JERRY WILSON
2SCR Public Affairs

Nearly 100 troopers of FIRES Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, recently participated in the time-honored tradition known as the Spur Ride.

The Spur Ride is an event held over multiple days during which a trooper must pass a series of physical and mental tests that evaluate leadership, technical and tactical proficiency, and the ability to operate as part of a team under high levels of stress and fatigue.

FIRES Soldiers participated in a three-day event that taxed them both physically and mentally.

In the early morning hours of day one, participants formed teams and gathered for their first hurdle, dubbed "the PT test from hell." The test included a three-mile run with various physical tasks along the route, such as push-ups, sit-ups, and the log and water can carry.

Next, during the land navigation course teams were required to plot and find eight points on a map in less than

five hours. The plots were spread out over a distance of nine kilometers.

On day two, tired and sore, the would-be spur riders gathered at the motor pool for a 15-kilometer ruck march with each trooper carrying a minimum of 35 pounds in his or her pack.

With very little time to catch their breath, teams were ushered from the finish line of the march to the next event, a timed obstacle course. Soldiers faced several challenges that tested their strength and ability to work as a team.

The final day began with a squadron run. Each team was then given a written test on the history of the regiment. Troopers were given five minutes to answer 15 questions.

After the test, the teams began several community beautification projects both around post and in the town of Sorghof.

The Spur Ride ended with a presentation where Soldiers were presented with their spur certificate, inducting them into the coveted Order of the Spur.

In the team standings, first place went to Bravo Battery Team 1; the Engineers team 8 took second; and third place went to HHB team 1. The top battery / troop average award went to the Engineers.



Above: A Spur Ride team collaborates on their answers for the Regimental history test.



Left: Soldiers help keep Rose Barracks clean by raking up leaves in a parking lot during the Community Service project portion of the three-day Spur Ride event.

War Eagles dedicate room to fallen brothers

Story and photo by
Spc. JERRY WILSON
2SCR Public Affairs

The War Eagles of 1st Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, gathered with their German counterparts from the 112th Panzer Brigade, recently, for the dedication of their newly renovated squadron classroom.

In addition, the unit unveiled the War Eagle Memorial Wall dedicated to the memory of the eight Soldiers killed during the regiment's deployment to Iraq last year.

The ceremony began with the unveiling of the classroom's new name. The classroom was named after Sgt. Patrick Leonard. Leonard was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions May 15, 1870.

Leonard and four troopers from C Troop, 2nd U.S. Cavalry Regiment, were searching the Little Blue River in Nebraska, when a war party of 50 Native Americans surrounded the group. Leonard slaughtered the two wounded horses and proceeded to use them to build a fortification. The troopers repelled the attack, killing three and wounding several others. With all their mounts killed in battle, Leonard withdrew his men on foot.

Following the room dedication, the Bürgermeister of Hirschau, Hans Drexler,

and Lt. Col. Markus Kreitmayr of 112th were invited to tap the first kegs of War Eagle Brau. War Eagle Brau was brewed specifically for 1st Sqdn., 2SCR, by the Hirschau Schlossbrauerei in honor of the numerous community outreach projects the squadron has performed in the city.

Once the kegs were tapped and the steins were full, glasses were raised in honor of the eight fallen War Eagles whose pictures adorned the memorial wall. Each trooper was toasted by a friend who described his character, and a stein of beer was poured for each and placed on the bar.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Gamboa, B Company, was described as the company cook, father figure and holder of wisdom. Known as Gumby to those in his unit, his death became the rallying cry for all future missions.

Sgt. Randell Olguin, C Company, was remembered for his generous and disarming nature. One Soldier recalled how Olguin loaned him and his pregnant wife a vehicle for a month without any thought of compensation.

Cpl. Steven Candelo, A Company, was remembered as a man who lived his life based on loyalty and integrity. He was the guy who could always break the ice in an awkward moment.

Cpl. Joshua Molina, C Company, was the Soldier you looked to get the job done. He was remembered for his sense of humor and his ability to make anyone laugh in a stressful situation.

Cpl. Jason Kazarick or "Kaz," B Company, was lovingly described as a grumpy old man who always had a smile on his face. Kaz spent his time enjoying Germany with his brothers-in-arms.

Sgt. Michael Lilly, B Company, was a big brother and mentor to his fellow troopers. As an NCO, he never had any sense of a duty day. Lilly was often found after hours helping his Soldiers with various problems and issues.

Sgt. John Daggett, B Company, was a very spiritual man who treated all his friends like family. His compassionate nature was evident to all who knew him.

Cpl. Justin Mixon, C Company, was a Renaissance man at the age of 22. He was best known as the man who could do any job in the unit needed.

Each man was toasted and remembered for how they lived their lives. This ceremony will be repeated at all future functions conducted in the room. The memorial bar was donated to the squadron by the War Eagle Foundation.



First Sgt. Andre Williams places a stein of beer on the bar in memory of his fallen Soldier and friend, Staff Sgt. Joseph Gamboa, during the dedication of the 1st Squadron classroom. The War Eagles dedicated a memorial wall to Gamboa and seven other Soldiers killed during the regiment's deployment to Iraq.

Army always seeking improvements for combat uniform

*Headquarters, Department of the Army
News Release*

Nothing says pride like a Soldier in uniform. Today's Soldier has much to be proud of in the current Army Combat Uniform (ACU).

As Sergeant Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston says, the ACU was designed by Soldiers, for Soldiers. Developed with functionality in mind, many design aspects of the uniform lend themselves to low maintenance, such as the 50/50 cotton/nylon wrinkle-free fabric and the shine-free boots. The uniform also has pockets for elbow and knee pad inserts for added protection, and drawstring at the ankles and waist for improved comfort and fit.

Since introduction of the ACU in 2004, the Army has made more than 25 improvements to the uniform and associated equipment based on Soldier input. These include a reinforced seat,



buttons on the cargo pockets, and better attachment of the infrared tab. This improvement process is ongoing, as Soldiers keep suggesting new ways to adapt the uniform to their needs.

Now the Army is focusing on the concealment the ACU provides to Soldiers operating in Afghanistan's unique environment of mountains, deserts and woodlands.

"The Army is all about taking care of Soldiers," said Command Sergeant Major Jeffrey J. Mellinger of the Army Materiel Command. "That means providing Soldiers with the best equipment. In this case, it means evaluating what is the best camouflage for uniforms in current operating environments."

The Army is exploring alternate

Soldiers in full battle gear travel a mountain trail in Afghanistan. The Army has made more than 25 improvements on the ACU since 2004.

camouflage patterns in two ways.

First, the Army is equipping two battalions in Afghanistan with uniforms and personal equipment in alternate camouflage patterns.

One battalion is receiving uniforms in MultiCam, a pattern worn by some Special Forces Troops in Afghanistan. The other battalion is receiving uniforms in Universal Camouflage Pattern - Delta (UCP-Delta), a variant of the current ACU camouflage pattern that incorporates the Coyote Brown color and reduces the percentages of sand and gray colors. The battalions also will retain their standard ACUs.

Second, the Army is evaluating six candidate camouflage patterns, including the currently used Universal Camouflage Pattern.

The intent is to determine which of the six currently available patterns, with corresponding personal protective equipment, provides Soldiers with

the most effective concealment in Afghanistan.

"We already have extensive data on the performance of various camouflage patterns in particular environments, but we need to keep building the science for Operation Enduring Freedom," said Brig. Gen. Peter Fuller of the Program Executive Officer Soldier. "For example, we need more information on how the uniform camouflage blends with the Soldier's combat equipment in specific environments."

While the issue of camouflage patterns has recently been in the news, the Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center has studied and reported on the effectiveness of different camouflage patterns for many years.

Feedback from testing is expected to be presented to Army leadership in early 2010.

MATVs arrive at JMRC, first in Europe

Story and photo by
TODD OLIVER
JMRC Public Affairs

All the technical data, all the statistics and all the official websites combined likely won't convey Staff Sgt. Carl Mitchell's enthusiasm for the 'truck.'

"This truck is amazing, I cannot say enough about it," he said. "The way it was put together, it makes me feel more confident and comfortable that if and when I have to go outside the wire my chances are definitely increased, like 99 percent."

With a name like the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All Terrain Vehicle it might be easy to see why someone would call it the 'truck' and that truck is now here at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center waiting for drivers to train on before headed for deployment.

Currently there are 10 'trucks' or MATVs at Hohenfels and eventually there will be 24 for deploying Soldiers to train with, said Tom Twombly, a member of a Mobile Training Team from the United States that specializes in the MATV. JMRC is the first training center in Europe to have a fleet of these vehicles available for training purposes.

During a training course for drivers from the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, headed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the 37,000 pound behemoth was put through extensive four-wheel-drive challenges.

Twombly knows exactly what Mitchell means.

"We went through the truck with them," Twombly said. "It was a 14-hour, one-day course



The four-wheel drive Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All Terrain Vehicle, or MATV, is put through its paces at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels where 10 are on hand with more on the way.

on the MATV. It's a lot of driving. There's about three hours of PowerPoint and the rest is on the trucks. Off-road, on-road, it's a lot of driving."

That's good news to Soldiers like Mitchell who, during a previous deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, had nothing but normal unarmored Humvees and 5-ton cargo trucks.

"It's just like apples and oranges compared to the trucks we used 10 years ago," Mitchell said. "You can't even compare the two vehicles. The way it was designed to deflect a blast, the doors are sturdier, the windows have added protection, and even the chassis has a fire suppression system which I think is very helpful.

If you have to roll through a situation, and the rubber (on the tires) catches (fire), that can hinder your escape route and this vehicle has a system that can suppress that. It will douse the flames on the outside as well as the inside."

"It's specifically designed for the terrain in Afghanistan," Twombly added. Where the MRAP was designed for an urban environment, the MATV is "more geared toward the off-road environment," he said. "The MRAPs really couldn't go off road; they wouldn't handle very well due to their suspension and their weight. You can go a lot more places with this one."

"That was all everyone was saying, 'Can we drive some more, can we drive some more?'" just due to the capabilities of the vehicle," Mitchell said. "You can get on a 30-degree slope, sideways, and not worry about it ... It was very impressive, what else can be said about it?"

And Mitchell should know. After more than 20 years of reserve and five years of active duty service as a motor transport operator, driving is his business.

"This training gives us a better idea and a better feel for the vehicle," Mitchell said. "Prior to my driving this vehicle I had no understanding of its capabilities, but ... I now have a great respect for it. I feel comfortable with its capabilities. ... You're able to see how far you can push it without having an accident. It's a test ground to see what your skills are like behind the wheel of a vehicle that weighs 37,000 pounds."

While most units rotating through JMRC will be able to use the MATV during their training event, individuals interested in training on the MATV should contact their unit master driver.

Philadelphia Marathon comes to Hohenfels

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

The same week runners laced up their shoes for the famous Philadelphia Marathon, Hohenfels runners also participated in a Philadelphia Marathon affiliated race without ever leaving post.

This feat was possible thanks to The Warrior Tours: America's Races Salute the Troops, a program that brings American marathons to troops around the world in an effort to recognize the commitment and contributions of the U.S. military while promoting running and fitness.

More than 300 runners came out for the Philadelphia Marathon First Wave Warrior Race 5k, produced by U. S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation in conjunction with the Philadelphia Marathon and The Warrior Tours organization.

"My motivation behind The Warrior Tours is to increase morale and inspire Soldiers," said Rob Powers, official announcer of the Philadelphia Marathon and tour founder.

Powers said the mission of The Warrior Tours is not just to bring a slice of home to the troops, but also to bring the Soldier story back to the United States.

"We join MWR's mission of bringing a slice of life to the troops," said Powers, a former Soldier athlete. "We want to come over with an entire pizza pie and also bring a slice back home by bringing those troop interactions back with us."

While at Hohenfels, Powers recorded video footage and messages that will be shown in the days leading up to the marathon on local network television as well as featured on Web sites connected with the Philadelphia Examiner, Competitor Magazine and on www.thewarriortours.com.

"Today we filmed a countdown that will be used to start one of the waves this weekend in Philadelphia. That just shows the connectivity between the troops and back home that we are trying to create," said Powers.

First place finisher 1st Lt. Dan Albers said he appreciates the support The Warrior Tours shows for Soldiers by bringing First Wave Runs overseas.



"I think it is awesome they are doing this," said Albers. "I'm a running enthusiast and for someone like that to come over here and, with the backing of the races, promote racing shows he cares.

"And to show some of this back home, it is pretty cool."

Albers finished the race with a time of 19:24. Second place finisher Zachary Hoeh came in at 19:34.

The initial leg of the tour kicked off July 6 with 800 troops participating in four races connected to various U.S. running organizations.

U.S. Olympic marathon gold

Rob Powers, official announcer of the Philadelphia Marathon and founder of 'The Warrior Tours: America's Races Salute the Troops,' shoots video footage of 527th Military Police Company Soldiers finishing the tour-sponsored Philadelphia Marathon First Wave Warrior Race, Nov. 17. Footage from the race at U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels was shown in Philadelphia on television and the Internet leading up to the Philadelphia Marathon, Nov. 22.

medalist Frank Shorter (1972 Olympics, Munich) and NASA astronaut Sandra H. Magnus, a participant in the Atlantis (2002) and Expedition 18 (2009) space missions, joined Powers and Bart Yasso, of Runner's World magazine, on the tour as part of an entourage of supporters.

Garrison hosts IMCOM-E flag football championship games

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

Service members from across Europe spent a well-deserved weekend blowing off steam while competing for the first place trophy in the Installation Management Command-Europe Unit

Level Flag Football Championship hosted by U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels, Nov. 6-8.

The Landstuhl Regional Medical Center team took home the title of IMCOM-E Flag Football Champions after beating Grafenwoehr's 561st Medical Co. 28-15 in the final game.

That final matchup was the third game of the day for the 561st, its second against LRMC.



After beating the team from U.S. Army NATO 6-0, the 561st lost to LRMC 24-21 in the first game of the semifinals.

That knocked the 561st down to the loser bracket where it met NATO again and managed to claw its way back to the final two by beating NATO 14-13.

Three back-to-back games on Sunday against tough opponents had taken their toll on the 561st and LRMC was able to increase its winning margin over the 561st in their second, and final, showdown of the day.

"We didn't lay down. We fought hard and played with what we had," said Staff Sgt. Tommie Crumedy, 561st team captain.

"We gave everything we got and came out victorious regardless," Crumedy said of the Grafenwoehr team's second runner-up finish in as many years.

For LRMC, this year's championship was much kinder to them than in 2008 when a poor showing in pool play kept them out of the playoffs altogether.

Master Sgt. Tyrone Taylor, LRMC captain, said part of the drastic improvement was good field condition, better than the mud of last year's championship that hindered their offense.

"We said when we have good field conditions like this there's not a team that can beat us," said Taylor, explaining that the dry conditions allowed them to take advantage of their greatest

asset, speed.

Both first place LRMC and third place NATO ended pool play with 4-0 records, though the 561st went into the tournament with one loss to the 535th Engineer Company from Bamberg.

Despite a 4-0 pool play record, the 535th did not make it into the semifinals after losing to both LRMC and NATO.

In addition to the 561st and 535th, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment from Hohenfels was the only other team of the nine Bavarian garrisons to make it into the playoffs.

After a 3-0 record in pool play, HHC, 1-4 Inf. Regt. lost its first game to the 561st. The 535th, 4-0 in pool play, won its first playoff game against the 589th Signal Battalion team from Baumholder, but lost its second round game to LRMC 19-0.

The 589th then bumped HHC out of the playoffs by beating them 18-0, but were themselves knocked out of contention after losing to NATO 13-7.

Results from other Bavarian teams in pool play: Supply and Transition Troop, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment from Vilseck: 1-2; Forward Support Company, 54th Engineer Battalion from Bamberg: 0-3; Hohenfels 527th Military Police Company: 1-3; 3-159 Aviation Regiment from Ansbach: 3-1; 500th Engineer Horizontal Company from Schweinfurt: 1-3; Ansbach 2nd Platoon, 527th MP Co.: 0-4.

Staff Sgt. Donald Bufford, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, tries to snake his way through defenders from Baumholder's 589th Signal Battalion during a game in the pool play portion of the IMCOM-E Unit Level Flag Football Championship hosted by U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels.

Team Apache from 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, has been deployed to Afghanistan in support of Task Force Zabul and the International Security Assistance Force since August 2009. The Hohenfels Soldiers are spread throughout Zabul Province, each platoon occupying a remote forward operating base. Photographers from the Joint Multinational Readiness Center Viper team were with Team Apache documenting their day-to-day operations throughout September and October.

Right: Soldiers conduct a reconnaissance patrol mission near Forward Operating Base Mizan.

Photo by Sgt. Kris Eglin



Team Apache patrols Zabul



Photo by Spc. Tia P. Sokimson

Above: During a dismounted patrol, Soldiers follow a road to get a better observation of the landscape below the Afghan Security Guard Tower 3 outside of Forward Operating Base Baylough in Zabul Province, Afghanistan.

Right: Left to right, Pfc. Kyle Lamse, Sgt. Andrew Eubanks and Pvt. Thomas Young unload a patient from a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter during a medical evacuation at Forward Operating Base Lagman.



Photo by Sgt. Kris Eglin

Far right: Pvt. Mark Powell, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, rests during a security halt at a reconnaissance patrol mission, near Forward Operating Base Mizan in Zabul Province, Afghanistan.

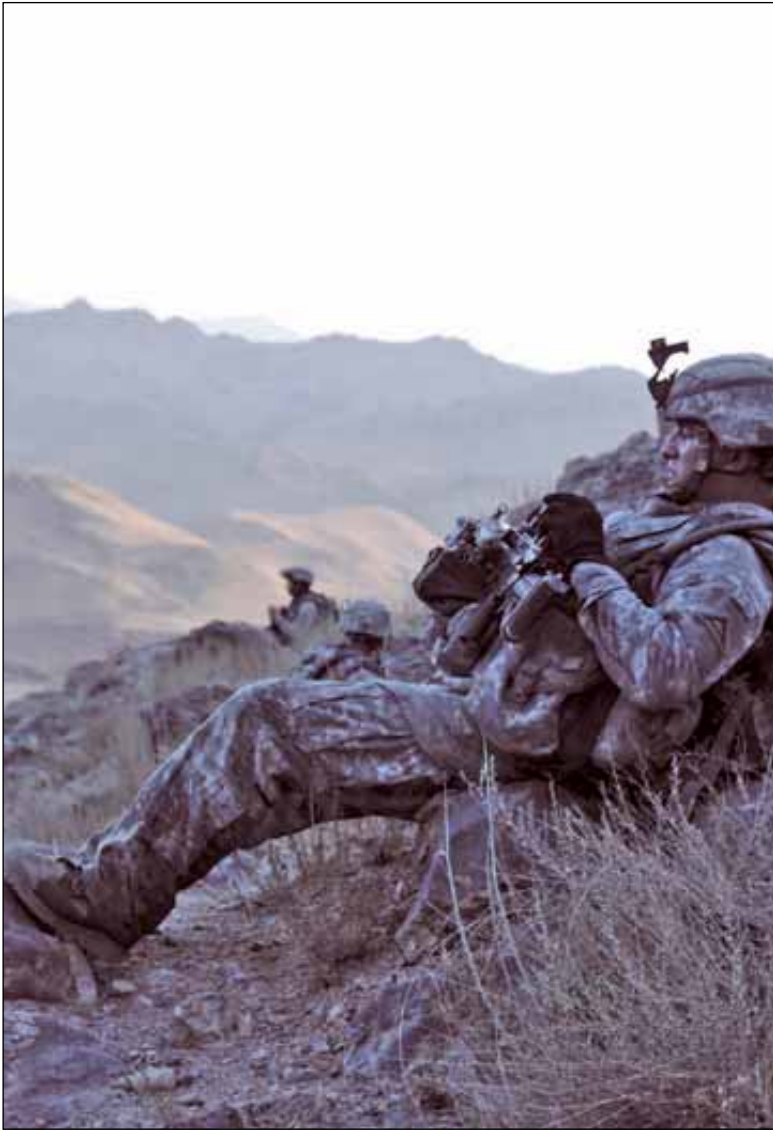


Photo by Sgt. Kris Eglin



Photo by Spc. Tia P. Sokimson

Spc. Slagle Justin returns to Forward Operating Base Lane from an air assault mission in Zabul Province, Afghanistan.



Photo by Spc. Tia P. Sokimson

Spc. Steven Hamilton, right, a medic attached to Team Apache, gives medical treatment to a 12-year-old Afghan boy in Mowtsi village in Zabul Province, Afghanistan.

What's Happening

Grafenwoehr/ Vilseck Briefs

DFAC Thanksgiving

The USAG Grafenwoehr Dining Facilities will offer Thanksgiving meals for authorized community members at the following times and locations: The standard rate is \$7 with a discounted rate of \$5.95 for family members of enlisted personnel in pay grades E-1 thru E-4.

■ Nov. 26, 11:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Main Post Grafenwoehr DFAC Bldg. 101.

■ Noon-2:30 p.m., Rose Barracks Stryker Inn DFAC Bldg. 603

■ Noon-3 p.m., Rose Barracks Dragon Inn DFAC Bldg. 612.

USO Thanksgiving

Join the USO family, Nov. 26, 6-11 p.m., for a Thanksgiving turkey dinner with all the trimmings and watch football games with friends at the new USO facility, located on Main Post, Bldg. 150.

Digital Photography Contest

Enter your best digital images to compete against the best photographers in the Army and win cash prizes. Open to active duty and civilians. Images must be submitted by Nov. 30.

Extra savings on fuel

From Nov. 30 – Dec. 4, as well as Dec. 28 – Jan. 1, military shoppers using their Military Star Card can take advantage of 20 cents per gallon of fuel on these dates.

Boy Scout Tree & Popcorn Sale

From Nov. 28 – Dec. 20 (Saturdays and Sundays) Troop 261 will conduct its annual sale at the Main Post Exchange from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Tree purchases are by donation and Popcorn is at a set price. Anyone wishing to sign up to assist the Boy Scouts can contact us at the below phone numbers. Don't forget to get a tree stand.

For more, contact Senior Patrol Leader Florian Sovine, 09645-60-2530, or Scoutmaster Geoff Dewitt 01621-62-5322.

Christmas tree lighting

This year's tree lighting ceremony will take place at Grafenwoehr East Camp on Dec. 1 at 5 p.m.

The Vilseck South Camp tree lighting will be on Dec. 2 at 5 p.m.

Both will take place in the respective Px parking lot. Plan to attend these exciting events.

Santa Claus and Saint Nicklaus will be present at both ceremonies handing out bags of goodies to children.

Gluwein, hot chocolate and kinder punch will also be available at no cost to the public.

East Camp Gate 1 will be opened to pedestrian traffic (to include local nationals).

Save A Life Tour (SALT)

■ Dec. 1-2: Main Post – Field House

■ Dec. 3-4: Rose Barracks – Memorial Gym.

One of the most advanced, high-impact alcohol awareness and anti-drinking and driving programs available including, drinking and driving simulators give Soldiers, civilians and family members a sober perspective on the effects of driving while intoxicated.

For more, or to register your unit for a presentation contact ASAP, DSN 475-1710, 476-1710 or 466-1710.

Men's Breakfast

There is a Men's Breakfast every second and fourth Saturday at the Rose Barracks Chapel, from 8-10 a.m., in Building 218 (Fellowship Hall).

The breakfast is sponsored by the Vilseck Protestant Chapel.

For more, contact Brian Wrede at or 0170-8378-576 or brian.wrede@asamnet.de.

Gate 1 closure

Effective today, East Camp Gate 1 will be closed to all vehicle traffic (inbound and outbound) for approximately three weeks. Work at the gate will not affect pedestrian entrance or exit.

Drivers should use other East Camp gates (Gates 3, 9, 6 and 20) during this time. Work on Gate 1 will be finished no later than the end of November.

AFN Radio updates

AFN Bavaria knows how important it is to have inclement weather information as soon as possible about road conditions and school delays or closures.

Starting Nov. 1, AFN Bavaria The Eagle Morning Show begins at 5 a.m., instead of at 6. If there's inclement weather information, it will be announced it throughout the day.

As of Nov. 3, AFN Bavaria The Eagle has moved to FM 98.5 in Grafenwoehr and Vilseck.

For more, visit www.bavaria.afneurope.net.

Estate claims

■ Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Sgt. Christopher M. Cooper of B Co., TF 2-28, 172nd Inf.

Bde., should contact the court martial officer 2nd Lt. Erick Blackham, at DSN 475-9262, CIV 09641-83-9262 or e-mail Erick.blackham@us.army.mil.

■ Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Pfc. Matthew C. Johnson of C Co., 2-28 Inf. Bde., 172nd SIB should contact the following summary court martial officer, 2nd Lt. Paul Petersen at DSN 475-8011 or e-mail paul.petersen2@eur.army.mil.

Antique Hunt Club

The Vilseck Community and Spouses Club's "Antique Hunt Club" heads to a variety of destinations each month to find great European antique treasures.

The club meets the first Tuesday of each month and car pool from the Vilseck Commissary at 9 a.m. and return by 3 p.m.

For more, call CIV 0173-4531837.

AL-ANON

AL-ANON meets every Thursday at 7 p.m. at Counseling Center (downstairs), Building 206 (near CDS) in Grafenwoehr.

For more, call CIV 0171-983-9151.

Craft shop events

For information on craft classes, call DSN 475-6101, CIV 09641-83-6101.

Framing classes are held the second Wednesday each month from 6-9 p.m. and the fourth Saturday of the month 9 a.m. to noon. Cost: \$35 plus supplies.

Zen meditation for everyone

Zen Meditation will take place at the Grafenwoehr Chapel annex every Monday at 5 p.m. All are welcome regardless of religious affiliation.

Wear loose, comfortable clothing and arrive a few minutes early if coming for the first time. Chairs and cushions for meditation are provided.

For more, contact Jody Dungay at jdungay@hotmail.com.

Command info survey

How do you get information on garrison events, programs and activities?

Completing this short six-question survey will give us valuable insight on how we can improve information delivery to you.

The survey is available at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil.

Now hiring

The USAG Grafenwoehr Chapel Community has immediate opening for several contracts to include music and secretarial services.

Contact the Chaplain Resource Manager at DSN 475-6583 for details.

Hohenfels Briefs

Tree Lighting Ceremony

The Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony will begin Dec. 4 at 4 p.m. at the Bldg. 1 parking lot.

The Hohenfels Elementary School Chorus will perform during the ceremony.

A Winter Wonderland will be set up with holiday crafts and private organizations selling hot food, beverages, and Christmas trees.

The event will also include a visit by Santa with special guest Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer.

Community Holiday Concert

U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels and the Joint Multinational Readiness Center will host a Community Holiday Concert featuring the United States Army Europe Band and Soldiers' Chorus, Dec. 17, at 6 p.m. in the Post Gym.

The Band and the Soldiers' Chorus is currently the Army's third largest musical organization, the biggest outside of the United States, and the Army's premier musical ambassadors in Europe.

The USAREUR Band as a whole performs more than 200 times each year, and has appeared in more than 20 European and Middle Eastern countries from Russia to Iraq.

For more about the band, check out their Web site at www.band.hqusareur.army.mil.

WIC Nutrition workshop

Join WIC Overseas-Hohenfels, for a fun and informational nutrition work-

shop, Dec. 1, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in Bldg. 10, Room 121.

The workshop will teach nine common nutrition mistakes, quick and easy healthy snack ideas, and recommended serving sizes for your calorie level.

The workshop is open to the community and no reservations are necessary. WIC is a supplemental nutrition program for qualifying pregnant, postpartum, breastfeeding women, infants, and children up to 5 years old.

Prague Christmas Market

At the Prague Christmas Market you can find Czech handcrafts, hot food and warm drinks being sold from inside the wooden huts.

Enjoy a wonderful selection of Christmas stocking stuffers to include Czech glass, wooden toys and much more.

The bus will depart from ODR, Dec. 5, at 5 a.m. and will return around 9 p.m. The cost is \$45 per person. For more, call DSN 466-2060.

Gingerbread House contest

Hohenfels Library will host the first annual Gingerbread House contest Nov. 19-Dec. 1.

Stop by the library anytime after Nov. 19 to pick up books to help you build your gingerbread house. Books are limited so stop by the library early.

Gingerbread houses need to be dropped off by Dec. 1 to be displayed for public judging. Winners will be announced Dec. 8.

For more, call Angelique Simmons at DSN 466-1740.

The Eclectic Book Club

The Eclectic Book Club, for men and women ages 18 and older, meets on the last Monday of each month from 5-6 p.m. at the library.

This month the group is reading The Places In Between by Rory Stewart, Nov. 30. For more, call DSN 466-1740.

Testing services

■ Dec. 2: The ACT will be given at 8:30 a.m. The initial test is free for the military. This test usually takes six to eight weeks to get the results back.

The tests at the Education center are primarily for entrance into the officer candidate programs.

High School students need to contact the Hohenfels High School for National Test Dates for the SAT and the ACT.

■ Dec. 9: The DLAB will be given at 9 a.m. You must have a DA Form 4187 signed by the commander.

For more, call Bobbi Jensen at DSN 466-4040. The Testing Services are offered in Bldg. 351.

Gift Wrap fundraiser

The American Red Cross is sponsoring the annual Holiday Gift Wrap at the Hohenfels Main Exchange Nov. 27 to Dec. 24.

The hours of the booth will be in conjunction with the AAFES Main Exchange operating hours.

A nominal donation amount is suggested in order for the gifts to be wrapped. Private organizations, units and FRG groups will man the booth and divide the donations among themselves.

The American Red Cross receives a percentage for functioning as the sponsor and administrator.

Shorten your to-do list and support your local community by having your gifts wrapped at the booth.

Stop by the Red Cross office, Bldg. 10, if your unit, club or organizations has not signed-up and would like to.

Kontakt Club Hohenfels

■ Dec. 2: Monthly bowling night at Lane 17, from 7-9 p.m. All are welcome.

■ Dec. 4: Kontakt Christmas Party with White Elephant Gift exchange. Bring a gift if you want to participate.

A brief member's meeting will be held beginning at 6:30 p.m. The Christmas Party will begin at 7:15 p.m. All are welcome. Meet at Josef's Tavern in the village of Hohenfels.

The Kontakt Club is a German-American friendship organization, sponsored by the U.S. Army that includes Soldiers, families, and other Americans supporting USAG Hohenfels, and German citizens from the surrounding communities.

The Hohenfels community is invited to participate in the Club's upcoming activities.

For more, or directions to the events call the Public Affairs Office at DSN 466-2457, or visit the club's Web site at www.kontaktclub-hohenfels.org.

Boy Scout Troop 303

Hohenfels Boy Scout Troop 303 will host a special Eagle Scout Court of Honor, Dec. 13, at 2 p.m. at the Community Activity Center. Four Scouts will be presented with the highest rank in Scouting. All local Eagle Scouts are invited to share this special event with the Troop and their families.

For more, contact Scoutmaster Lt. Col. Yancy Wood, at DSN 466-4901 or e-mail Yancy.wood@eur.army.mil.

VFW meeting

The Veterans of Foreign Wars will meet at the Post Theater at 5:30 p.m. every second Tuesday of the month.

The next meeting is Dec. 8. Contact Rufus Allen at foxx@allenr.de.



My SF

Mystery shopper

For information please contact your local ACS Employment Readiness or Volunteer Coordinator

DSN 476-2650
Civ 09662-83-2650

DSN 475-8371
Civ 09641-83-8371

MWR



Winter Wonderland X-mas Party

4 December

Rose Barracks, "the Zone" Sports Bar

Costume Party - dress in your best christmas outfit

bring an inexpensive, unisex gift to put under the christmas tree

For more information contact DSN 475-8822

I.A.M. SOLDIER

MWR

What’s Happening

Ansbach Briefs

New dialing pattern change

On Nov. 15 the Barton Barracks phone switch was reprogrammed. DSN to DSN dialing patterns will not change as well as outbound DSN to commercial dialing patterns will not — dial 99 and then the commercial number. What will change will be the dialing pattern for inbound calls from commercial numbers: instead of dialing 0981-183-xxx, 0981-183-7xxx will be required. Ensure this information is made available to those who must contact your Barton military numbers from off-post.

Registration extended

Ansbach Sports and Fitness has extended its regular registration period for most sections of basketball, wrestling and cheerleading. Contact central enrollment at DSN 467-2533 in Katterbach and 467-4880 on Storck Barracks. In addition, they are in need of coaches for the following in Katterbach: 2 bambino (ages 3-5); 1 peewee assistant (ages 6-7); 1 bantam (ages 10-12); and 1 junior (ages 13-15) basketball coach; 1 peewee and 1 minor cheerleading coach and some assistants for wrestling (ages 6-14). Storck needs one peewee and one minor basketball coach and help with peewee and minor cheerleading. Certifications for coaching are next week. Contact DSN 468-7866, CIV 016098-905-8959 for full details.

AWAG conference

The Franken area of AWAG conducts a mini-area conference Dec. 12, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Warner Barracks Conference Center in Bamberg. This year’s theme is “Self Sufficient in the New Year” and will cover several varieties of topics. The cost is \$25 and includes a light breakfast and lunch. Reservation deadline is Nov. 23 and may be paid for by check or money order. For more, contact CIV 0171-649-5728 or e-mail franken@awagonline.org.

Earn a masters degree

The University of Oklahoma is registering now for spring 2010 courses — it’s the perfect time to begin your master’s degree. OU provides the flexibility needed to earn a master’s degree.

- Apply, enroll and start courses anytime, no GRE required.
- Receive quality instruction through the intensive teaching format, which includes advanced class preparation and a one-week class session.
- OU faculty are flown to local education centers to provide high-quality instruction.
- Work on your degree downrange. OU offers online classes, independent directed readings, and independent study courses that can be completed anywhere in the world.
- Your degree will be recognized both nationally and internationally.
- Complete your degree in 16-24 months.
- Nonthesis degree programs between 32-36 credits.
- Contact the local site director at DSN 467-3325, CIV 09802-83-3325 for more.

Schweinfurt Briefs

Welcome home 172nd

The Stars and Stripes will feature a special welcome home section dedicated to the 172nd Infantry Brigade in its Dec. 4 edition. Pick up a copy of the paper to view the highlights of the Blackhawk Brigade as it completes another successful mission.

Ledward Comm. Bank closed

The Community Bank on Ledward Barracks will be closed tomorrow. For teller services, go to the Community Bank on Conn Barracks, open from 9 a.m. to noon. Regular operating hours will resume Friday.

CMRs open Saturdays

To accommodate holiday mailing traffic, community mailrooms and post offices on Ledward and Conn Barracks are now open Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. through Dec. 19.

Christmas markets

The Schweinfurt Christmas markets begin tomorrow and will run Mondays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sundays 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. The market ends Christmas Eve with hours of 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Thanksgiving meal

The Schweinfurt dining facilities on Conn and Ledward Barracks will serve a Thanksgiving meal tomorrow from 11:30

a.m. to 3 p.m. Cost is \$5.95 for E-4 and below, and \$7 for E-5 and above and their family members.

Seasonal tree lighting

The community is invited to the seasonal tree lighting ceremony, Dec. 6, in the Andrus Garden, behind Bldg. 206 on Ledward Barracks beginning at 4:30 p.m. Children are welcome and can anticipate a visit from Santa Claus.

CFC – Overseas

The Combined Federal Campaign – Overseas is an annual charity campaign and is seeking your help. From now until Dec. 4, community members can make donations through their unit representative or by stopping by Ledward Bldg. 206, Room 315. Online donations are also accepted at www.cfcoverseas.org. Make a difference today.

Ski trip

Outdoor Recreation is taking a trip to Austria Friday through Nov. 30. Cost is \$299 and includes transportation, three nights lodging with breakfast and dinner, and beginner lessons. Bring euro for lift ticket. Sign up now by calling CIV 09721-96-8080.

Support groups

Meet others living with Autism and learn about resources available at the Asperger’s and Autism support group Friday at Army Community Service, 10 to 11:30 a.m. To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Video game tournament

Come test your skills at Rock Band at Ledward Library Saturday beginning at 3 p.m. Compete against others on the guitar, drums or singing. For more, call CIV 09721-96-1740.

ADD / ADHD support group

Meet others living with ADD and ADHD and learn about resources available at the support group Nov. 30 at Army Community Service, 10 to 11:30 a.m. To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Crafts Studio trip

- The Ledward Crafts Studio is taking a trip Sunday to the Hohenrother Advent Bazaar at Reineck. Transportation departs the crafts studio at 8 a.m. with a stop at a flea market on the way.
- The Studio will also take a trip, Dec. 6, to the Advent Market at Kloster Seligenstadt. Transportation departs the crafts studio at 9 a.m. Sign up now by calling CIV 09721-96-6903.

BOSS meet ‘n’ greet

The Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers, or BOSS, program invites you to a meet ‘n’ greet, Dec. 3, at the Finney Recreation Center from 1 to 5 p.m. Mingle with other Soldiers of the community while enjoying numerous activities. For more, call CIV 09721-96-8476, DSN 353-8476.

Orientation for newcomers

Are you new to the Schweinfurt community? If so, then the five-day Schweinfurt Newcomers Awareness Program is the fit for you from Dec. 7 through 11. Free child care is available the entire week. Get acquainted with the military community as well as the German town of Schweinfurt. For more information or to sign up, call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933

Book club

The community is invited to attend the adult book club at Ledward Library Dec. 3 at 5:15 p.m. Coffee, tea and treats will be served. For more information, call DSN 354-1740, CIV 09721-96-1740.

G.U.T.S.

Teen newcomers are invited to Army Community Service’s class “Giving Understanding to Teens in Schweinfurt,” or G.U.T.S., at the Schweinfurt Middle School library, Dec. 2, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Take a bus tour through town, learn basic German phrases and more. Bring euro for lunch. To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

FRG 101

Come learn how your family readiness group can help you be successful

in the military community at the FRG 101: Intro to the FRG course, Dec. 1, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Yellow Ribbon Room. To sign up, call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Playmornning

Attend playmornings every Tuesday and Thursday, from 10 to 11:30 a.m., at School Age Services. Parents with children ages newborn to 3 are encouraged to attend. Meet other parents, build your child’s social skills, play games and participate in developmental activities. For more, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Love and Logic parenting

Parenting doesn’t come with a manual, but learning to become a “Love and Logic” parent may make the job a little easier. Come to the Army Community Service class, Dec. 9, from 9 to 11 a.m. to discover your parenting style and learn tips on how to raise loving, respectful and responsible children. For more, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Wood shop orientation

Want to learn how to make your own picture frame or chess board? Come to the Wood ‘N Frame Shop orientation Saturdays from 10 to 11:30 a.m. The class is required to use the wood shop for any project. For more, call CIV 09721-96-6304.

Paintball thrills

Play paintball with your friends on Saturdays. The Conn Air Field is open for paintball every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Bring your own equipment or find out about rental packages. Group discounts are available for more than 15 people. Call Conn Outdoor Rec for more information at CIV 09721-96-8080.

Learn ceramics or pottery

Want to learn a new craft? The Ledward Crafts Studio offers mold ceramics orientation every Saturday for only \$20 including all materials needed. Pottery classes are also available from 2-4 p.m. using the potter’s wheel. Cost is \$35 plus materials for six sessions. To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6903.

Cosmic bowling

Enjoy an evening of cosmic bowling at the Kessler bowling alley on Fridays and Saturdays from 8 p.m. to midnight. Dim the lights, turn on the disco ball and listen to the music as you bowl your best game ever.

Garmisch Briefs

Rothenburg Market

Join us for a one-day trip, Friday, to the Christmas Market in the walled city of Rothenburg ob der Tauber. Cost:\$39.

Krampus in Berchtesgaden

“The “Krampus” originate from the darkest centuries of Pagan festivals. They wear masks of wood and leather, and costumes of fur with huge cowbells. They keep their identity a total secret. Their job is to guard St. Nicholas as he makes his rounds, and scare the evil out of you.

Running from house to house, they terrorize naughty children, and literally beat the sin out of bystanders with whips. This is a terrifying, insane, amazing cultural event, not to be missed and not for the faint of heart. We will depart the Burke Center on Saturday, Dec. 5, and arrive in Berchtesgaden in time to check out the Parade and Christmas market. We will stay overnight at the Hinterbrand Lodge, and return Sunday. Cost is \$45.

Brewery of the Month Club

From the Beer Purity Law of 1516, Weissbier, and the Hofbräuhaus, to the Oktoberfest, beer gardens, and the “Royal Bavarian Academy for Agriculture and Breweries,” the histories of the Bavarian Royal Family and Bavarian beer go hand-in-hand. Join us at Kaltenberg Castle for a hearty meal and taste the “Beer of royal sovereignty.”

Included in our samples will be the 2008 World Beer Award winning “World’s Best Helles,” “World’s Best Wheat Beer,” and the famous König Ludwig Dunkel which singlehandedly reinvigorated the German Dunkel Beer Market.

The truly brave and courageous will even try Ritterbock, the two-time “World’s Best Doppelbock” award winner. Cost is \$59, meal included.

Munich Bus

FMWR runs a bus to performances of the Munich Symphony, and for the very inexpensive cost of \$12 and if the bus is not full of concert and opera goers, we have been known to take along some people who just want to enjoy the Hofbrauhaus, catch a movie in English, or do whatever other things one does in a big town! Call DSN 440-2638 , CIV 08821-750-2638.

Free Winter Safety Check

at Automotive Skills

Be prepared for the cold and snowy winter!
Get your car checked by the professionals to ensure you're safe this winter season.

1 November - 1 March
at Auto Skills Center on Katterbach & Storck Barracks

Call for an appointment.



For more information, call 467.4608 or 09841.83 4608



Seasonal Tree Lighting



USAG Schweinfurt
Ledward Barracks
Andrus Garden
December 6
4:30 p.m.



For more info, call 09721-96-6762/DSN 354-6762.

Salzburg

Hailed as ‘Rome of the north’

Story and photos by
EMILY ATHENS

USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

Most may think of “The Sound of Music” when it comes to Salzburg, Austria, but it can be argued that the hills aren’t the only thing alive in this renowned city.

Salzburg, a town with extensive history dating back to the Stone Age, has withstood riots, wars and other instances of devastation. Despite any destruction over the years, Salzburg has maintained its visible beauty - even using its rugged appearance to its advantage.

Boasting baroque fortresses, abbeys and castles for the architecturally savvy, there is much to see for all tastes. Furthermore, offering tasty treats at roadside cafes or from market square vendors, Salzburg has earned its reputation as ‘Rome of the north,’ according to local tour guides and city brochures.

Salzburg can be navigated by car or public transportation fairly easily. For those bringing a personal vehicle, the Mirabell underground

parking is centrally located in the “altstadt,” or old town, and almost always guarantees a spot. The exit from the parking garage brings you to a fresh vegetable, fruit, meat and fish market occurring on weekends, and also offers items such as jewelry, Salzburg souvenirs, and clothing for a price that, of course, can be haggled.

Before veering in other directions, tourists must check out the beautiful Mirabell Gardens across the street, most famously known for its appearances in “The Sound of Music.” This attraction is appealing year-round for tourists who wish to take a lazy stroll, sit on benches amidst the well-maintained grounds, and admire the fountains and sculptures.

The Salzbach River runs through the city and visitors are encouraged to walk alongside it and take in the panoramic view of the fortress sitting atop, dominating the skyline and overlooking the city. Named the Hohensalzburg Castle, visits can be made via the train that runs up the hillside. Be sure to have a camera on hand because once at the top, the views overlooking

Salzburg are stunning and are a must on anyone’s itinerary.

If one does not wish to make the trek up the hill to the fortress, simply visit Hotel Stein, where the rooftop restaurant offers trendy drink specials and tasty appetizers. If it is dessert one craves, order the “Salzburger nockerln,” a traditional Austrian treat similar to that of a soufflé. Or if a dessert on the go is preferred, pick up a “Mozart kugeln” at most souvenir shops. These chocolates are like little pieces of heaven, filled with an almond paste, and can be identified easily because Mozart’s face dons the wrapper.

For the history buffs and musically inclined, there’s much to see and learn about the life of famous Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Check out his birthplace on Getreidegasse, a street well-known for its shops, or visit the home in which he grew up, now a museum housing his instruments, letters and other personal items. A simple map and comfortable walking shoes are needed to get to each of these locations as they aren’t too far apart from each other.

Following the map along Getreidegasse, tourists will come to the Mozartplatz, or Mozart Square, where a statue of the composer stands proudly in the middle. This is also a great place to browse the many shops and perhaps sit at an outside cafe, weather permitting.

And let’s not forget about the sights and sounds of the ever-popular musical, “The Sound of Music.” Tours can be booked in advance. However, for those who enjoy a more flexible schedule, simply grab a map with the locations of the movie hotspots and off you go.

A vehicle and a navigation system will make this excursion easiest and most enjoyable. Be sure to take the 20-minute drive to the small town of Mondsee, where the wedding scene was filmed at the Mondsee Church. The scenery along the way is breathtaking and tourists can treat themselves to the best apple strudel they may ever have at one of the cafes across the street from the church.

Whatever you decide to do in Salzburg, an enchanting time is guaranteed.



Background: Taking a drive just outside of Salzburg, one can view the Austrian countryside, abundant in beauty.

Foreground, clockwise from top left: Visiting the Hotel Stein rooftop restaurant is a quick and easy way to get a full view of Salzburg; Mirabell Gardens, a popular tourist attraction, boasts well-maintained gardens, statues and fountains. Many scenes from “The Sound of Music” also were filmed in the gardens; Salzburg offers something for everyone, but proves just small enough to wander the many side streets without the need for public transportation; The Leopoldskron Castle sits in the city center on a lake and park where tourists can walk and take in the sights. The castle is also a stop for anyone wanting to relive “The Sound of Music,” as the patio and water scenes were shot at this location; Mozart’s birthplace is a popular tourist attraction located on Getreidegasse.

Seasonal and H1N1 flu shots best protection for mom, baby

Story and photo by
JENNIFER WALSH
BMEDDAC Public Affairs

With flu season in full swing, Bavaria Medical Department Activity officials are encouraging people to take preventive measures seriously, especially pregnant women. “A pregnant woman who gets the flu is 10 times more likely to be hospitalized than infected people in the general population,” said Capt. Joseph Woodring, chief of preventive medicine. “The best protection for pregnant women and their baby is to make sure they get both the 2009 seasonal and H1N1 flu shots.”

Although there is a mist version of the seasonal flu vaccine, Woodring said pregnant women are only eligible for the injectable shot. Both seasonal flu shots and 2009 H1N1 flu shots are recommended for pregnant women at any time during pregnancy.

“We want our pregnant women to get the injectable version of both the seasonal and H1N1 vaccine,” Woodring said. “One of the benefits is that they can get both flu shots at the same time.”

One of the concerns Woodring said pregnant women may have is about thimerosal, a mercury preservative found in vaccines that come in multidose vials.

“We will only receive H1N1 vaccines that contain thimerosal,” Woodring said. “However, it’s important to know that the Food and Drug Administration has endorsed the vaccine we are receiving and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said the vaccine is safe for pregnant women.”



Angela Valarezo receives her 2009 H1N1 vaccine from Shannon McDuffie, a nurse at the Vilseck Army Health Clinic, Nov. 13. The Bavaria Medical clinics are currently immunizing all uniformed service members and high-risk beneficiaries, such as pregnant women.

In the event a pregnant woman finds herself battling flu-like symptoms, she should seek medical attention.

“If a pregnant woman thinks she has the flu, she should call her doctor right away,” Woodring said. “If needed, the provider should prescribe antiviral medicine that treats the flu. Antiviral medicine is most helpful if it is started within the first 48 hours after high-risk people, which includes pregnant women, become sick.”

Since all of the pregnant women in Bavaria receive their health care at host nation hospitals, Woodring said they should also know the basics of being treated for flu-like symptoms.

“If a pregnant woman goes to a host nation hospital with flu

symptoms and is not given antiviral medication, she needs to go to her local Army health clinic to possibly receive antiviral medication,” Woodring said. “Also, if lab testing for the flu was done, the antiviral treatment should not wait for the test results to come back.”

The current antiviral medication being used to treat the flu includes: oseltamivir, also known as Tamiflu, and zanamivir, also known as Relenza.

The antiviral medicines fight the flu by keeping flu viruses from replicating in the body. According to Woodring, this results in a milder illness and makes you feel better faster.

Antivirals can also prevent serious flu complications.

“At this time, Tamiflu is the

best medicine to treat pregnant women who have 2009 H1N1 flu,” Woodring said. “Please also realize that we’re only giving antiviral medication to high-risk beneficiaries, such as pregnant women, who may not recover as well from the flu.”

Currently, there are no studies that suggest pregnant women or their babies will have adverse outcomes from taking antiviral medication. Woodring recommends women talk to their doctor if they have questions about the medication.

“We’re here to answer questions,” Woodring said. “Take advantage of it so that you’re comfortable with getting the vaccine and if needed, antiviral medication.”

For more information about the seasonal and H1N1 viruses, visit the CDC Web site at www.cdc.gov.

a shot of advice



by **Lt. Col. STEPHEN LINCK**
BMEDDAC

Hello, I am Lt. Col. Stephen Linck, deputy commander of Nursing for the Bavaria Medical Department Activity. As the DCN, I am frequently asked questions about health care here in Bavaria.

If you have a health-related question, please e-mail brmc-pao@amedd.army.mil. I will always answer your question via e-mail and your question may appear in the next edition of A Shot of Advice.



Now, I’d like to answer some frequently asked questions I get about the H1N1 vaccine. Many of you are aware that we received the first of two shipments of the H1N1 vaccine. The shipment we received is for uniformed personnel and certain high-risk beneficiaries. Our shipment for the general civilian population is delayed, but we expect it by the end of the year. Below are some of the recent questions I’ve gotten about the H1N1 vaccine.

Q. I heard we are receiving different versions of the vaccine, is this true?

A. Here in Europe, we are receiving vaccines from two manufacturers - one from Novartis for uniformed personnel and high-risk beneficiaries, and the other from Sanofi-Pasteur for all other beneficiaries. There are many reasons why we have different manufacturers. One reason is the funding for the different populations comes from separate sources. Another reason is the supply from a single manufacturer is not sufficient to meet our entire population.

Q. What is the difference between the two vaccines?

A. The main difference between the two vaccines is that the Food and Drug Administration has licensed the use of the vaccines for different age groups. The Novartis vaccine is recommended for ages 4 and up, while the Sanofi-Pasteur is safe for anyone more than 6 months old.

Q. I am not sure I want the vaccine since I feel like it was rushed and has not received sufficient testing.

A. The H1N1 vaccine is very similar to the seasonal influenza vaccine you may have already received. In fact, the manufacturing process is the same for both the H1N1 and seasonal flu vaccines. In my opinion, this vaccine should do very well at protecting people from the H1N1 flu. This particular strain was first identified in Mexico in early 2009 and this vaccine is made specifically to protect against that H1N1 strain. In contrast, the seasonal flu vaccine is an educated guess by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention about the three strains most likely to infect the most people in the next year. I don’t consider this vaccine rushed since the manufacturing process is the same, and the only difference between H1N1 and seasonal influenza vaccines is that we know exactly what strain of influenza we are trying to protect people from.

Q. Do I need the vaccine if I’ve already had H1N1 flu?

A. Yes, the CDC recommends vaccination regardless of whether you have had H1N1 influenza or not. Also, getting the vaccine will not give you the H1N1 flu.

Protect yourself, protect your baby

- Get your flu shots — pregnant women will need both the 2009 H1N1 flu shot and the seasonal flu shot.
- Take everyday precautions – practice and preach good cough etiquette, good hand washing and avoiding sick people.
- If you have been exposed to someone who likely had the flu and you are pregnant, call your doctor.
- If you are pregnant and start to feel sick, call your doctor right away. Take the medicines your doctor prescribes and let your Army health clinic know if you did not receive antiviral medication from a local national hospital.
- Plan to breastfeed as soon as your baby is born.
- Having a fever can cause problems for pregnant women and their unborn child. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) is the best way for pregnant women to lower a fever.

Moderation keeps pounds off during holidays

by **Capt. JENNIFER LEE**
BMEDDAC

Holidays are a time to enjoy being with family and friends and feasting on traditional meals. It is also the hardest time for those trying to lose weight as food always seems to be the central focus.

Instead of trying to lose weight, striving to maintain your current weight may be a more realistic goal.

Contrary to the popular belief that most people gain five to 10 pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day, a study published in the New England Journal of

Medicine in 2000 suggested Americans gain only about one pound during the holiday season.

So how do you enjoy the feast and maintain your weight? The emphasis is on control and moderation, not on avoidance. Here are some healthy holiday tips:

■ Do not starve yourself before a party. Eat a light, healthy snack such as a bowl of cereal, yogurt, vegetable sticks, fresh fruit, trail mix or a glass of low-fat milk beforehand.

This will help you curb hunger and make better choices.

- Offer to bring a healthy dish to the party. That way, you will have at least one good choice from which to choose.
- Plan before you eat by checking out all the food options. It is okay to have some holiday treats, just spend your calories wisely and then enjoy the foods you choose. Make every bite count by eating foods that hold special meaning or those that you only get during the holidays.
- Choose these foods more often:

turkey breast, chicken breast, tossed salad, steamed vegetables, plain potatoes, fresh fruit, plain rice and mineral water.

■ Choose these foods less often: beef prime rib, pie, cake, stuffing, gravy, bread pudding, candy, eggnog, sugar-sweetened beverages and high-calorie alcoholic beverages.

■ Eat slowly. Take the time to enjoy your meal by taking small bites and chewing slowly. It usually takes about 20 minutes for your brain to get the message from your stomach that you are full.

■ Focus on socializing. Celebrate and focus on what the holidays are really about – spending time with family and friends. Find ways to get your family and friends to play a game or be active instead of eating. Pick a time to get together that does not revolve around a meal.

■ Stay active and keep up with your exercise regimen. Sign up for a 5K or fitness walk or other events with family or friends.

■ Remember that the holidays are truly only three actual days – Thanksgiving, Christmas - or Kwanzaa or Hanukkah, which is eight days - and New Year’s. So if you blow it only on three days, you won’t cause much damage.

It is the vicious cycle of not enough exercise and too many calories that cause weight gain during this time of the year.

If you do happen to overeat, try to avoid stressing about it.

Editor’s Note: Capt. Jennifer Lee is the chief of Nutrition at Bavaria Medical Department Activity.



Lee



Garmisch community hosts powwow

Garrison celebrates American Indian Heritage Month, with fun & games focus on its children

Story and photo by
JOHN REESE

USAG Garmisch Public Affairs

The Garmisch community was invited Nov. 18 to a powwow at the Pete Burke Center on Artillery Kaserne to commemorate American Indian Heritage.

This event was different from years past when contracted dancers or singers performed. Instead, this year the kids got to play American Indian games, work on Indian crafts and eat Indian food.

Children from Garmisch Elementary-Middle School and interested adults took part in round-robin workshops featuring a hands-on bow and arrow demonstration, “dream catcher” arts and crafts, American Indian games, and Navajo fry bread. One of the games involved one child rolling a hoop while another attempted to fling a “snake stick” (actually a long, decorated cardboard tube) through it. Most of the activities took place in the center’s ballroom. The archery demonstration was held adjacent to the nearby military working dog training area.

“It was a really special event. I took this observance personally and it turned out great,” said event organizer Jessica Roberson, FMWR Pete Burke Center.

Roberson took on the labors of creating this event due to the departure of Garrison Equal Employment Opportunity officer Freddy Osorio. In addition to orchestrating the observance, Roberson told stories about the Nez Perce, Inuit, Sioux, Iroquois, Navajo and Cherokee tribes, pointing out where each tribe was located in North America. Most of Roberson’s help came from fellow Pete Burke FMWR employees.

“I’ve got a short video running about American Indian’s creation story,” said Drew Benson in a whisper so as not to disturb those watching. A group of children with teachers and parents sat on the floor in the center’s smaller room, transfixed by the story. Benson, one of the Alpine Experts

from Outdoor Recreation, was one of the FMWR employees who made the observance happen.

Later in the program the Navajo Fry Bread was a big draw as the aroma drew in the curious and hungry. Garmisch teachers and parents led by Shelly Hanson used the kitchen of the Pete Burke to fry the bread and help participants add extras to make Navajo tacos. Navajo Fry Bread, sometimes called elephant ears or fried dough, is a popular dish found in the Southwest, especially at county fairs, and can be used for Indian tacos or eaten like a dessert.

The history of the bread in America is unclear: research turned up references to Scottish or Spaniard influences roughly 200 years ago, but the food became popular with American Indians and is sometimes referred to by a tribal reference like the Navajos. Sometimes the bread dough is wrapped around a stick and cooked over a campfire instead of frying.

An interesting connection to the Army came while checking the Wikipedia Web site on fried bread — the page features a photo of a deployed Soldier from the Creek Nation preparing fry bread for her comrades.

Two fifth graders attending the powwow gave Roberson “after action” cards.

“I really liked how you put this together to remember the Native Americans. The Navajo bread and the archery was awesome,” wrote Finn Roou, adding: “I got my arrow right in the middle.”

For Sidney Hopson, it was all about thanking Roberson for a great day.

“I really liked how you made all of this happen,” said Sidney. “It was the most fun I’ve had in a long time.”

For Roberson, putting the observance together was a lot of work that was rewarded by reactions like Finn’s and Sidney’s.

“The kids and teachers were invited because they haven’t been able to participate fully in our events over the last year and yet they supply us each time with a ton of artwork,” said Roberson. “So doing the event this way was my way of saying thank you for all of their help over the last year.”

He said all of the 2009 community ethnic observances took place while the children were at lunch. “The teachers seemed to get a lot out of it as did the kids, so I’m happy we did this,” he said.



Above: Garmisch Elementary student Bailey vanBuren and storyteller Jessica Roberson point out different locations where American Indian nations were at in North American. Roberson was the organizer for the ethnic observance.

Right: Little warriors take aim as Lawrence Tindall, Garmisch Outdoor Recreation Alpine expert and part-time William Tell, coaches them on archery as part of the Garrison’s American Indian Heritage celebration, Nov. 18.



AROUND THE ALPS



Spec. Jayvis Patterson (left) and Sgt. Robert Cassill, Northern European District Veterinary Command, flank Garmisch commissary manager Teresa deJesus as she puts the finishing touches to her store’s entrance Thanksgiving display. The Vilseck Soldiers were conducting a routine inspection of the commissary.

Right - Garrison barbecue specialist and housing furniture warehouse manager Albrecht Pecher took advantage of a sunny afternoon to grill up burgers for his co-workers. Pecher, a German air force reserve NCO, is always requested as “grill sergeant” for community and German-American events.



Photos by John Reese

GO HOME !

Visit the U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Web page for up-to-date news, events, contact information and more at www.garmisch.army.mil.



Provost Marshal’s Corner



Holidays call for increased safety awareness

by **JOHN REESE**

USAG Garmisch Public Affairs

Garmisch antiterrorism officer Richie Reeder is always thinking of ways to keep the garrison safe and secure, and with the holiday season rapidly approaching, he wants community members to remember operational security while they’re out and about.

“The holidays are a time to spend time with family and friends and to get out and enjoy the festivities. Christmas markets and shopping come to mind,” said Reeder. “We all work hard and should enjoy this time of year, but we should also keep security in mind.”

Reeder offers a few tips to keep security in mind during the holidays:

- In crowded areas, wear a money belt.
- Avoid planned gatherings or demonstrations and maintain awareness of your surroundings so you will recognize conditions which may lead to a spontaneous demonstration.
- If you happened to come upon a demonstration, remain calm and disengage from the situation. Avoid speaking loudly.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Try to be inconspicuous. Don’t draw attention to yourself.
- Travel in small groups (never alone) and vary movements. Stay away from high-risk areas.
- Always let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Know emergency numbers and potential safe areas.
- If possible, carry a cell phone.
- Maintain your vehicle and keep a full tank of gas.
- If an incident occurs while in a travel status, at your destination, or any location on your itinerary, inform your unit of your status as soon as possible.
- Monitor AFN, when possible, for updated information while travelling.

Reeder also mentioned USAG Garmisch Provost Marshal Capt. Scott Wolda is moving on to another assignment and the garrison will have a farewell luncheon for him, Dec. 10.



Photos by Bob Mungas

Left: Ansbach Middle High School Biology teacher Brian Farrell conducts a session on falconry as seventh graders (from left) Evangelyn Byczkoski, Ava Green and Claire Farrell befriended a snake during the school's Wellness Day, Nov. 12.

Above: Eleventh graders Tyler Beier (left), and Steven Schiltz participate in a session on self-defense at the Ansbach Middle High School. The session was taught by Stephanie Payne and was part of the school's Wellness Day, Nov. 12.

‘Wellness Day’ gives students a break

by **RONALD H. TOLAND JR.**

USAG Ansbach Public Affairs

Deployments are hard -- on Soldiers, communities, families and children, not to mention tweens and teens who are already struggling through what can be a difficult period in life.

With the 2009/2010 school year well underway, Ansbach Middle High School decided to up the curriculum's ante this year, adding a little something extra — a Student Wellness Day, Nov. 12, which included some interesting themes.

Lasting about an hour each, student wellness information sessions encompassed a variety of valuable information, and provided students with activities that positively affect their overall wellness, said Principal Jennifer Rowland.

"The sessions included physical, mental, emotional and financial, with most students participating in a session on deployment issues and healthy relationship building," she said.

But Rowland noted that variables and demographics were also incorporated

into the sessions.

"Middle school students participated in a session on drugs and alcohol, while high school students participated in other sessions like financial wellness and a winter driving session if they have a license," she said.

And there is more.

Rowland said 20 selected students also participated in a teen forum with the garrison commander, and all students participated in one or two sessions of physical activity or relations.

Besides regular classes, extending students' lessons about the importance of whole health is pertinent, said Rowland.

"The sessions on depression, deployment and winter driving were mandatory from either the community or from the school's side of the house, so it represented a way to cover mandatory requirements for students, while providing some fun activities reminding students of ways to rid themselves of stress during the winter months and this long deployment," said Rowland.

According to garrison officials, during the winter driving sessions teens were shown a video

on what can happen while texting or talking on a cell phone behind the wheel -- a big issue for all drivers.

"This session was very beneficial to our young adults who are licensed in Europe to drive in Germany," said Steve Rice, drivers training instructor for the garrison.

"Many of them have not yet had the opportunity to feel or see what it's like to drive during the winter season."

Rice said it's important to provide young adults with informative, safe driving tools and any helpful tips are always a good bonus lesson for teen drivers.

"If just one person takes this to heart, it will save a life. This is one of the most important things in the life of the Army and to save a life makes a difference," he said.

He also noted that reaching out to the young adult community makes them feel important, too. He said it's not just the Soldiers who represent us in Germany, but the younger population as well.

"It's a good way for them to see the different kinds of programs the military provides to their

parents; even the younger audience can benefit from these programs that are just as important in everyday live," added Rice.

Students agreed about the benefits of the sessions.

"(The relaxation session) was very relaxing and just a lot of fun -- there wasn't very much to it so you could just sit back and learn some things," said seventh grader Claire Farrell.

"Relaxation was very calm; you closed your eyes and were picturing things, like where you wanted to be," she added.

"It was just a day without work -- to sit back, relax and have fun with your friends," said fellow classmate Evangelyn Byczkoski.

School officials said they are planning follow-up sessions during the year, but in smaller groups for reviewing and updating previously presented information the students received.

"With such issues, there needs to be an ongoing dialog review and not just done one time then dismissed," said Patricia Limb, guidance counselor at the school.

Editor's Note: School faculty and garrison personnel contributed to this article.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher DeHart

Spc. Eric Bjorklund, UH-60 Blackhawk repairer and crew chief, B Company, 412th Aviation Support Battalion, plays with his daughter Cypress, 2, prior to the departure of the 12th CAB advance party in Hangar 2, Nov. 8.

The advon consisted of Soldiers from Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, 412th Aviation Support Battalion and 3-158th General Aviation Support Battalion, and will be helping to smooth the transition of the Griffin's main body when it follows them in the next couple of weeks. Families and friends of departing Soldiers were able to spend the last few hours together before the advon members completed out processing.

Operation Hero Tree builds bonds

Soldiers' children place stars on tree at school, demonstrate their support

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.

USAG Ansbach Public Affairs

As Operation Hero Tree got underway at the Ansbach Elementary School, young students hung crafty red, blue or yellow stars on a tree for the safety of their Soldier.

"The yellow is for deploying Soldiers and the red and blue are for nondeploying Soldiers," said Rachel Curry, Parent, Teacher and Student Association president for the school.

"This gives the children something physical to know they are special and that they are doing something, not only for our community, but for a larger cause," said Curry.

She said the stars will hang on the tree during the school year, as well as throughout the summer.

"This is an ongoing symbol of what they are doing and is it important for the children to have something tangible for them to see that this is the turning point and that they are not alone. It shows our support for them."

"When the sponsor comes home, they will be able to switch out the star with them," said Curry.

As Ansbach Soldiers prepare to head out again, families agree this is a good idea for the children.



Pfc. Richard Jordan, B Company, 412th Aviation Support Battalion, holds his son Devin, 5, as he places a yellow star on Operation Hero Tree in support of deploying Soldiers at Ansbach Elementary School, Nov. 5.

"This is a coping tool," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Anthony Coleman, Echo Company, 3-158th Aviation.

"This is an opportunity for the community to recognize deployed Soldiers and coming together for it as a family event helps the kids cope with the deployment, making it fun in the process," he said. "I'm comfortable knowing that the community is involved in the deployment."

And deploying commanders agree that the stars are a good coping tool, noting

that for the children, deployments are not easy.

"They have a tough job while we are gone," said Lt. Col. Robert Howe, 5-158th battalion commander, who also spoke at the event.

"This is an awesome thing and I'm humbled and honored that the community cares so much, is focused on our safety and is so involved," Howe said. "It helps us get our job done easier without worrying about the home front."

44th ESB builds leaders through training

Story and photo by
MARK HEETER

USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

Soldiers with Company C, 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, took part in Outstanding Warrior Week exercises in the Schweinfurt training areas, Oct. 26 through Oct. 30.

“Basically, it’s a crawl, walk, run. This is Soldiers’ stuff that we need to do and they need to accomplish,” said Lt. Col. Dwayne Dickens, 44th ESB commander, shortly before joining seven of his Soldiers to form a team on the Situational Training Exercise (STX) lanes.

The week included weapons ranges, individual warrior tasks and battle drills, according to Maj. Tyler Oxley, 44th ESB executive officer.

“It’s just one of those things that separates the expeditionary signal battalions apart from our strategic brethren,” Oxley said. “We really do have to have those tactical skills. We do have to be able to go out and employ our weapons systems well and be able to operate in a field environment.”

Conquering the individual tasks is the crawl ahead of the walk and run, which will come during company- and battalion-sized exercises, according to Dickens.

“The tasks are individual tasks, but at the end, it’s a team, collective effort,” said 2nd Lt. Mendola Nash, the officer in charge of organizing the STX lanes.

“They actually go out in eight-man teams, so they have to work together. They have to build that team cohesion, because if they don’t it’s not going to work,” Nash said.

The week was filled with rehearsing, drills and after-

action reviews, giving Soldiers and their leaders many opportunities to develop and react under stress, Nash said.

“We allow them to build as leaders, to make that decision, and to execute. And then we tell them how they can make it even better,” she said, adding that the urban-site training was the most beneficial, according to comments she received from the Soldiers.

Everything from hand-and-arm signals to first aid and moving in a formation to an objective was evaluated, and scenarios included unforeseen stressors.

“As a leader on the battlefield, as an NCO, you’re going to have to be able to handle stress. You’re going to have stuff you can’t control,” said Capt. Mathew Brenan, Company C commander. “As long as you keep moving through, making decisions, nine times out of 10, you’re going to make it alright.

“So we’re stressing them, raising the drama and letting them deal with it in a controlled matter, letting them take one bite out of it at a time, using the tools the Army gives them,” he said.

Soldiers from the 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion take their positions on the firing line during Outstanding Warrior Week.

The week included exercises in weapons ranges, individual warrior tasks and battle drills, rehearsing and after-action reviews to give the Soldiers and leaders opportunities to develop professionally.



DPW’s Huppmann a master of materials

Story and photo by
MARK HEETER

USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

Thousands of screws, miles of piping and electrical wire, a million gallons of paint, and tons of wood and plaster, spread out among 99 craftsmen who take more than 2,000 requests for service orders per month. This is the fabric that comprises Georg Huppmann’s career.

“Twenty percent is the same, routine stuff. But day-to-day business changes,” said Huppmann of the mostly new and fresh tasks that he faces



Georg Huppmann works his calculator as the master work scheduler and material coordinator for the USAG Schweinfurt Directorate of Public Works.

each day. Huppmann works as the master work scheduler and material coordinator for the USAG Schweinfurt Directorate of Public Works Business Operations and Integration Division (BOID).

“That used to be two positions, so he’s a double-man,” said Joerg Hohenadel, BOID chief.

“We (BOID) are more or less the window to the garrison from the DPW,” said Hohenadel, whose division handles all work and service orders – all of which, submitted online, over the telephone or in person, go through Huppmann, who then dishes them out to the foremen and workers, who show up at the door with the toolbox.

“Without somebody like that, I would be lost. It would be far more work,” Hohenadel said, calling Huppmann his “right arm.”

Huppmann began working with the Army in Schweinfurt in 1975 to replace another carpenter who was about to retire: his father.

“My father said I should go put in an application at the CPOC (Civilian Personnel Operations Center). Well, it wasn’t called CPOC back then,” he said with a smile, commenting on the vast changes he has seen since moving out of the carpentry workshop into his current job in 1980.

“It was a different world,” he said. In those days, he said, craftsmen would mix and match parts, regardless of the fit or the aesthetic beauty of the end product – a cabinet with a different-colored handle on each door, for example.

Despite the advances, changes and developments that Huppmann has embraced for more than three decades with the Army, one constant remains each day and each year, he said.

“We are here for the customers,” he said, recalling a sign, hung prominently by a former boss in the work area, containing one simple message about the customers: “What have you done for them today?”

With an analogy one might expect out of the DPW, Hohenadel likens the BOID to a machine, and he knows which parts are important.

“He’s one of these wheels in the big machine, and if that breaks down or cracks, we are in deep, deep trouble,” he said.

For who would take care of assigning the work order?

Preparedness is the key to negotiating winter roads

by **EMILY ATHENS**

USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

The coming months may boast winter wonderlands, but dangers can lurk beyond the beauty and drivers are encouraged to operate vehicles with extra caution.

“Winter driving starts at home. Check the weather forecast and plan accordingly,” said Juergen Hoechemer, safety specialist for the USAG Schweinfurt Safety Office.

Hoechemer explained the important aspects of winter driving, to include cooperation with German laws.

“You must have your vehicle prepared with winter tires. It’s also the law to have antifreeze and windshield wiper fluid in the car at all times,” he said.

When ice and snow covers the ground, drivers need to react to the circumstances and drive carefully.

“Adjust your speed to weather conditions. Sometimes driving slow is not slow enough. Distance is also important, especially in winter time. Double your distance because this gives you enough time to react or completely come to a stop,” Hoechemer said.

According to Hoechemer, if you’re mentally prepared for winter driving, then you’re best prepared and will not only reduce chances of hurting yourself, but also decrease the risk of harming others.

“The most important reason for safe winter driving is not to get into an accident and injure yourself or others. Think about your life and the life of others and use your judgment; if you can’t drive, then don’t drive,” he said.

If driving is a must, however, be sure to have a full tank of gas and be equipped with ice scrapers, blankets and warm clothing in case of an emergency.



Courtesy photo

The onset of winter brings important guidelines for drivers to consider.

ODR offers trips for upcoming winter season

by **NATHAN VAN SCHAİK**

USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

Ski and snowboard season is upon us and staff members at USAG Schweinfurt Outdoor Recreation Center recently released the 2009-2010 ski and snowboard trips schedule.

The ski and snowboard season, which extends from November to March, weather-permitting, includes trips to Sölden, Austria, Nov. 26-29; Flachau, Austria, Jan. 15-18; and Dolomites, Italy, Feb. 12-15.

Weekly trips to the Wasserkuppe in the Rhoen, a local favorite and only an hour’s drive from Schweinfurt, also made the grade. Trips to the Rhoen run every Saturday night beginning in December, or whenever snow conditions permit.

“We chose these sites based on years of experience,” said Christian Hofstetter, Outdoor Recreation Director. “I’m a snowboarder by heart and I like to try different areas. I tested many sites out and feel that these are the best areas.”

ODR kicks off the season with a four-day trip to Sölden, Austria, over the Thanksgiving weekend. Seats are still available and a price tag of \$299 covers transportation, lodging, breakfast, dinner, and ski and snowboard equipment.

“Sölden has a glacier area which is huge. And also by the end of November, they open up the lower elevation,” Hofstetter said.

“I’m going to Sölden to relax, which is a good thing over the Thanksgiving holiday” said Staff Sgt. Nathan Moore of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, USAG Schweinfurt. “I

know Outdoor Rec. does great things.”

Recent Sölden ski reports indicate that as much as 50 cm., or about 20 inches, of snow have already blanketed parts of the slopes.

“Lots of ski runs with plenty of snow. Good for all levels of riding,” Hofstetter said of Sölden.

Beginners and experts alike are invited to enjoy the trips. “We cater to all levels,” Hofstetter said.

ODR has a certified snowboard instructor, teaching beginner through advanced levels, and is in the process of outsourcing an instructor to teach ski lessons, according to Hofstetter.



Those discouraged by tourist buses and the herds associated with group trips need not worry.

“If people want to go skiing, great. If they want to stay in the hotel or go downtown, they can do that. If they want to be on their own, they can do that as well,” Hofstetter said.

All four-day trips cost \$299 and local trips to the Wasserkuppe cost \$29. ODR provides a wide range of ski and snowboard equipment and is located at Building 50 on Conn Barracks.

To book a reservation, call DSN 353-8080 or CIV 09721-96-8080.

View from Apartment Sonhof overlooking the Austrian Alps in Flachau, Austria. Participants of the Flachau ski trip sponsored by USAG Schweinfurt Outdoor Recreation Center will room here for three nights Jan. 15-18.

Photo by Christian Hofstetter

Reintegration requires communication

Understanding, grace
keys to successful
reunions following
a long deployment

Story and photo by
EMILY ATHENS
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

Soldiers returning from a deployment must reintegrate back into a normal military routine away from combat, but while they adjust to all the changes within the Army environment, they also often face changes on the home front.

“I think the most difficult aspect of a Soldier reintegrating is adjusting to the huge change that comes all at once,” said Carolyn Hudson, family member of the 9th Engineer Battalion who, with four children, is coping with a third deployment alongside her husband.

“Literally overnight everything changes – their work environment, living quarters, even the climate – and it’s a lot for them to process,” she said.

The Army strives to ease the sudden transition of Soldiers back into everyday life following combat deployments. The Schweinfurt community alone houses numerous agencies and resources ready and willing to support families readjusting to life together.

Unit chaplains, the Behavioral Health clinic, and Army Community Service all stand by to help the returning Soldiers and their families.

But first, healing wounds and moving forward starts with the family and, the best medicine is communication.

“Soldiers and their families need to be prepared for any challenges put before them when reintegrating and communication is most important,” said Chaplain (Maj.) Sam Dunaway, unit chaplain for the 9th Eng. Bn. and 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, “Growing together is what makes it easier.”

Dunaway, who has endured three deployments with his family, explained the possible challenges of reintegrating back into a home to include changes that have occurred during the duration of a deployment, role reversals,

understanding what each other has gone through, and emotional strife.

“It’s important to recognize that both were involved in their own battles,” he said. “Coming back together ... they need to find balance, talk to each other, support each other, reconnect.”

The balance, Dunaway said, comes from understanding the needs of each partner.

“Men need honor, respect, trust and devotion while women need safety, security, cherishing and companionship. Understanding this is tremendous,” he said. In addition, he said because of these differing needs, families are encouraged to be flexible, accommodating, uplifting and patient.

Whether it is the family’s first or fifth deployment, with or without children, Dunaway stressed that preparation, communication, and understanding are the key components to a healthy and successful reintegration.

According to Hudson, families can intentionally influence the reunion with their Soldier and head in a positive direction; it just takes a little “grace and understanding.”



Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Duncan, of Bravo Company, 172nd Support Battalion, greets his wife, Teresa, and three children, Taelor, 9, Tomas, 7, and Tobias, 3, at the welcome home ceremony, Nov. 7. Soldiers of the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate) will continue to trickle in after a yearlong deployment in Iraq. The reintegration phase that soon follows upon arrival is an important step for a healthy adjustment.

Engineers return from Bulgaria

First in a two-part series about 15th Engineer Battalion’s deployment to Bulgaria

Story and photo by
EMILY ATHENS
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

About 30 Soldiers from the 15th Engineer Battalion, based out of Schweinfurt, deployed to Bulgaria in June to link up with Joint Task Force – East, a multinational task force designed to strengthen relationships between the United States, Bulgaria and Romania. Having returned last week, Soldiers bring back memories of a job well done.

“The mission was to fix up schools. We fixed plumbing, sinks, tiling, did electrical work, light fixtures, outlet receptacles,” said Pvt. Andrew Gonzales, 902nd Company, who was tasked as an electrician while in Bulgaria.

Soldiers of the 15th Eng. Bn. worked side-by-side with the Bulgarian military, U.S. Navy Seabees, and local contractors building, renovating, and improving not only the quality of schools, but the quality of life for children, including projects at a Kindergarten in Padarevo and an orphanage for the disabled.

“You see the little kids, and it’s heartbreaking because they are still kids and deserve better,” said Spc. Christopher Lemay, 902nd Engineer Company, who was tasked as a plumber.

Their work was part of the Humanitarian Civic Assistance Mission, an ongoing movement to build positive relationships and improve living conditions for local nationals, while providing training opportunities for participating service members, explained Capt. Jennifer Gonser, who worked as the headquarters commandant throughout the deployment.

In addition to the construction efforts, Soldiers collected money to give back to those in need.

“We got together and went around asking, ‘Who wants to donate?’” Lemay said. He said for Padarevo alone they collected 900 Bulgarian leva, or almost \$700.

Furthermore, 2,300 Bulgarian leva were collected, over \$1700, for the Medven Orphanage where Soldiers bought new mattresses, computers, toys and much more.

“We knew we wanted to do an outreach program. We wanted to get out and have people see us in more than just a military role. They were surprised

we would help them ... surprised it was all for them,” Gonser said.

But the acts of kindness didn’t stop there.

Family members of the 15th Eng Bn., in partnership with Schweinfurt-based chaplains, conducted a drive to collect clothing, toiletries and school supplies to send to Medven for the orphanage.

“We received 32 boxes for the disabled children at the orphanage, Gonser said. “People were floored. We handed it directly to the kids and they were in tears. They never get that kind of help.”

After building schools, providing relief and meeting training requirements, 15th En BN Soldiers returned from a successful deployment. Mission accomplished.



Maj. Dennis Salcedo, 15th Engineer Battalion, greets daughters Tabatha Nicole, 10, and Mariennis Dacet, 16, upon arrival from a deployment to Bulgaria supporting the Humanitarian Civic Assistance Mission with Joint Task Force – East, Oct. 29.

Teamwork, cooperations unites Soldiers

Story and photo by
MARK HEETER
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

The pitcher has the catcher. The quarterback has the wide receiver. And the guard has the forward.

Two members of a team come together to complete the play, close out the game – or finish a deployment.

“I don’t really feel like it’s cooperation. I feel like it’s one big team,” said Maj. Andrew Allen, the Schweinfurt-based operations officer for the 172nd Infantry Brigade.

“It seems like when you say ‘cooperating,’ it’s like two people working together but it seems like we’re part of the same team,” Allen said, referring to USAG Schweinfurt and the brigade reintegrating Soldiers recently returned from a yearlong deployment to Iraq.

The USAG Schweinfurt and the units it supports are well-tested at the seven-half-day reintegration process.

Soldiers begin the week with classroom instruction and administrative matters before moving on to medical, family, dental, agency and unit-specific reintegration stations.

“It helps enable the Soldiers who are coming back from downrange to effectively, efficiently, and as smoothly as possible reintegrate back into the community and their family,” said Steve

Watts, USAG Schweinfurt Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security.

“A lot of things changed while they were gone, so we’re updating them administratively, personally,” Allen said.

Every Soldier spends either the morning or afternoon conducting business, allowing him or her to spend time the other part of the day with family or friends, according to Watts.

“It gives Soldiers the flexibility to accomplish their unit mission and to link back up with their families,” he said.

“The family is very important part of this, in order for the Soldier to transition back from being deployed, with their Soldier family, to reintegrate back into their home, the community family,” Watts said.

The Blackhawk Brigade continues its redeployment to Schweinfurt and Grafenwoehr over the next several weeks.

For photos of the welcome-home ceremonies and seven-half-day reintegration, check out the Flickr photo stream at www.flickr.com/photos/schweinfurtpao.



Capt. Lawrence St. Amand, chief, occupational therapy, Schweinfurt Army Health Clinic, offers consultation to Sgt. 1st Class Robert Thiele, Company B, 9th Engineer Battalion, during the second day of Thiele’s reintegration.

Family Advocacy offers alternatives

The third article in a three-part series about domestic violence

by **NATHAN VAN SCHAİK**
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

Scenario: A young woman with children married to a service member is the victim of repeated domestic abuse. Her husband threatens her not to report any cases of abuse to the authorities. If she does, he warns, he could face possible discharge from the military. Consequently, the woman and the children will lose access to spousal benefits and access to the Soldier’s pay.

That threat is an abusive tactic batterers may use to control their victims, according to Capt. Diana Colon, a behavioral health clinician and chief of Social Work Service at the Schweinfurt Health Clinic.

“(Abusers) hold that power over their spouses,” said Colon, who uses the Power and Control Wheel to illustrate these control methods to her patients, stresses the dangers of perpetual abuse.

“Domestic violence is chronic and progressive and it usually ends in death if you do not get intervention, and that’s what we want to try to prevent and avoid,” she said.

That military spouses are hesitant to report cases of domestic violence does not go without merit. Convictions of domestic violence can have devastating effects on a Soldier’s career, thus undercutting a spouse’s support.

“If you have been convicted of a domestic violence offense and tried and found guilty, you will have to be kicked out of the military,” Colon said.

Under the Lautenberg Amendment to the Gun Control Act of 1968, Soldiers tried and found guilty of domestic violence are not authorized to carry a firearm nor are they eligible for overseas assignment. Soldiers with qualifying convictions will face challenges toward advancement and career opportunity.

“The Lautenberg Amendment is key to our program,” said Colon.

Still, family members should not have to endure domestic abuse because of leverage an abuser may have. The Army offers victims numerous ways of reporting abuse either anonymously or without the dread of affecting a Soldier’s career.

But there is another avenue of which victims of domestic violence should be aware.

In 1994, Congress established the Transitional Compensation program for abused dependents of military personnel, according to the DoD’s Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence. Temporary payments are now available to spouses and children of service members who have been separated or sentenced to a forfeiture of all pay due to domestic violence.

The decision came after research indicated that dependents failed to report abuse because they feared the impact that the loss of the Soldier’s support may have had on their lives. The transitional compensation program is an effort to reduce victim disincentives to reporting abuse, according to the Defense Task Force.

Victims of abuse eligible for transitional compensation may receive payments at a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 36 months. Other benefits include medical care, exchange privileges and commissary privileges.

The amount of compensation varies but can be found at the Department of Veterans Affairs Web site at www.vba.va.gov (follow the links under “Benefits” and “Compensation & Pension”). For more information, contact the USAG Schweinfurt Family Advocacy Office or the USAG Schweinfurt legal office.

Chefs battle for 12 Europe team slots

Continued from Page 1

“I take some things (from training events) and distill it into things I’ve done in the past. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn’t,” said Pelkey, who was the runner up in the Junior Chef of the Year competition and one of the 12 chefs selected for the USAREUR team.

Another first-time competitor, Staff Sgt. Levy Robinson (also from Team Grafenwoehr), made the USAREUR team by scoring the highest in the live cooking and static display categories, earning 37.5 out of a possible 40 points. Last year he was an infantryman.

Participants like Robinson and Pelkey drew from their own experience but also picked up ideas from other chefs in the competition — including one of the judges.

Kelly Conwell, the U.S. National Student Chef of the Year, took a break from her studies at a culinary exchange program near Erfurt, Germany, to help judge the competition.

In addition to judging, Conwell was able to “practice a little,” she said, before she leaves in January to compete internationally at the Hans

Bueschkens World Junior Chefs’ Challenge in Santiago, Chile.

“The Soldiers are reaping the benefit by having (Conwell) here because they see things she’s doing and want to mimic them,” Warren said.

For now, the 12 members of the USAREUR team will return to their units and begin individual preparation for the competition.

As team leaders, Warren and Sgt. 1st Class Leonardo Alvarez, dining facility noncommissioned officer in charge, will develop requirements for the competition and assign Soldiers to individual and team categories for which they are best suited.

“We have a young team, however, they all exhibit the ability to adapt to the training to be successful at the (Department of the Army) level,” Warren said. “I think with proper training and practice, we’ll be tough to beat.”

Editor’s Note: Suzanne Bartsch, U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Public Affairs, contributed reporting.

USAREUR Culinary Arts Team
Staff Sgt. Stevie Bronson, Grafenwoehr
Spc. Holly Moss, Grafenwoehr
Pfc. William Pelkey, Grafenwoehr
Staff Sgt. Levy Robinson, Grafenwoehr
Mr. Daniel Trawick, Hohenfels
Sgt. Kevin Auvil, Schweinfurt
Sgt. Joseph Dinunzo, Bamberg
Sgt. Jesse Parker, Heidelberg
Pfc. Antoinette Davison, Mannheim
Pfc. Matt Hendrix, Mannheim
Pfc. William Krull, Mannheim
Spc. Calvin Parker, Mannheim
Sgt. Ken Turman, Vicenza

Pfc. William Pelkey, from Team Grafenwoehr, prepares a chicken using a technique known as “French breasting” during the U.S. Army Europe Culinary Arts Competition, Nov. 13.



Mental health services reach out to Soldiers

Continued from Page 1

According to Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Paul Lasley, Rose Barracks community chaplain, the chaplain hot line is available anyone experiencing a crisis. However, Soldiers should seek counseling if the problem persists.

“Commanders have to make sure small unit leaders, down to the platoon and squad level, give Soldiers time for behavioral health appointments,” Lasley said. “Behavioral health, especially issues dealing with suicide ideation and post-traumatic stress disorder are health issues, and like medical appointments, Soldiers need to be given time during the day to attend sessions with counselors and chaplains.”

Another resource is the Military OneSource hot line. The hot line is staffed with counselors 24 hours a day and is completely anonymous. However, if follow-up counseling is

desired, the caller must provide his or her name in order to receive a referral for one-on-one counseling services.

If follow-up in-person counseling is desired, Military OneSource will set up up to 12 sessions with a provider, either a military or civilian behavioral health counselor. Additional sessions will need to be referred through Tricare.

Callers can reach Military OneSource by dialing 1(800) 342-9647 or refer to the drop down menu at www.militaryonesource.com on how to place a toll-free call from Germany.

Erasing the stigma

The stigma associated with seeking behavioral health counseling is an issue for military personnel and civilians. In order to better educate leaders on the importance of mental health, several programs are currently being developed and enhanced, such as a behavioral health component to the Warrior Leader Course. This segment will address stigma and behavioral health issues, which will strive to make Noncommissioned Officers more aware of problems their Soldiers might experience and encourage them to speak with someone who can help.

Another program is ASIST, or Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training. The military currently uses ASIST to educate personnel as a form of suicide prevention first aid. This two-day seminar teaches participants to identify someone who might be contemplating suicide, and act as a first responder for that person with role play, much the same way a Combat Lifesaver course is conducted. USAG Grafenwoehr is working to expand ASIST training.

Another resource is ACE (ask, care and escort). All Soldiers, regardless of rank, will be exposed to ACE, which Lasley called the Army’s suicide prevention strategy. With ACE, the

“ask” portion involves determining if a buddy is having suicidal thoughts. “Care” means staying with the person so he doesn’t harm himself, and then “escorting” him to proper resources, such as a behavioral health professional or chaplain.

All Soldiers conducting in-processing will be exposed to a half hour presentation about suicide prevention in Grafenwoehr (Main Post) and Rose Barracks. The presentation covers ACE, myths about stigma, and a short video of Capt. Emily Stehr, a physical therapist with the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, who contemplated suicide and is working to overcome her personal struggles from a deployment.

“Army culture is in the process of change, and leaders in Grafenwoehr want to support Soliders’ injuries or needs, they want to make sure Soldiers are not harassed any time they need help,” Lasley said.

Part of suicide prevention is not just targeting those contemplating suicide, but addressing risks that are common factors such as isolation and relationships, according to Chaplain (Maj.) Stan Copeland, the Military Family Life Chaplain for Rose Barracks. Single and married Solider retreats and single Soldier day trip excursions, which are often free, are two ways to help combat these risks.

“Chaplain retreats prevent isolation,” Copeland said. “Suicides typically involve relationship catastrophes. (We’ll do) whatever we can do to help strengthen relationships and help single Soldiers choose healthy relationships.”

Copeland has found that these programs help bridge the gaps isolation creates, and bring people together, to hopefully give life some meaning “among people where spirituality is important, life is too precious to commit suicide.”

Preston stresses commitment



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston speaks to Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment at the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Post Theater, Nov. 5.

Continued from Page 1

that there are approximately 263,000 Soldiers currently deployed, more than at the height of the Iraq surge in 2007, and the stress that puts on the all-volunteer force.

He said to get the Army back in balance, Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George Casey laid out four strategic imperatives to sustain, prepare, reset and transform the Army. He then touched briefly on all four while stressing the role NCOs play in the successful accomplishment of each.

Preston said to achieve the first goal of sustaining the all-volunteer force, the Army needs to have high recruitment and re-enlistment rates, the second of which is greatly influenced by NCOs.

One of the reasons Soldiers re-enlist is because of command climate, he said, which begins with junior NCOs, from corporals and sergeants all the way up.

“It’s all about leadership ... command climate creates the atmosphere where Soldiers want to continue to serve, they want to continue to be a part of that organization, they want to continue to be part of that band of brothers and sisters,” Preston said. “They don’t want to leave it. It’s family ... If you work for a crappy boss you’re not going to stick around, you’re going to leave.”

Preston said the command climate also creates the essential atmosphere in which each Soldier feels he is a valued member of his team and is proud its mission.

Preston then spoke about the role Soldiers and NCOs of the Joint Multinational Readiness Center play in the second key piece of Casey’s strategy.

“We need to continue to prepare Soldiers for success in the current fight, and all of you here are part of that process ... You help train and you help prepare the Army for the missions that we have been given. And at the same time you are also part of that fight. That’s something all of you can be very proud of,” Preston said.

As he spoke about resetting and transforming the Army, Preston shared with Soldiers topics he discussed with President Obama during a meeting with the president and other senior enlisted military personnel in January.

Preston said the top things he wanted to address with the president were stress on the force, recruitment, retention and the Year of the NCO.

He said Obama asked why the Army was using a 15-month deployment model when other services were using shorter deployments. Preston said because of the demand for troops in theater versus the number of troops available, Army leaders were faced with the difficult decision of either 12-month deployments with eight to nine months at home, or 15-month deployments with 12 months at home, and ultimately chose the latter.

Now that units are off of 15-month deployment schedules, Preston said Army senior leaders are moving forward on formally establishing a reset model for the human element of the Army machine with the goal of six months dwell time before beginning preparations for the next deployment.

Preston said he also shared with the president the hardships frequent and prolonged deployments place on Soldiers, their spouses and their children. He told him about how frequently changing schools can leave children behind a grade at their next location and how changing duty stations can force service members to sell their homes at a loss.

When Preston spoke to 1-4 Inf. Regt. Soldiers about moving forward and the positive recruiting and retention numbers he shared with the president, he said they should each be proud to be “the best our society has to offer.”

Council discusses challenges for training, the way forward

Continued from Page 1

State Chancellery said his office is committed to harmonizing military needs and the demands of the population to develop working solutions to keep U.S. forces in the region.

“The presence of the U.S. armed forces is a balanced and essential element of the trans-Atlantic relations from the point of view of the Bavarian state government,” said Mittmeyer. “Therefore, and because of the political structure of the trans-Atlantic relations and the economic impact, which results from the stationing of forces here, the Bavarian state government promotes keeping U.S. forces here and when possible expanding.”

The wide-open spaces of picturesque training areas of Bavaria provides the backdrop for high intensity live-fire and maneuver training, while the base infrastructures provide jobs and industry that keep the rural communities booming despite poor global economic conditions.

“The armed forces in Bavaria provide about 5,400 jobs in the civil area,” said State Minister Siegfried Schneider, head of the Bavarian State Chancellery. “The United States Army is calculated to be in the top 15 largest employers in the free state of Bavaria.”

The meeting sought to bring a basic understanding of the unique challenges posed by the cultural, political and economic differences to share information and gain a better perspective — the way forward.

“I have the hardest job I think, and that is to describe the National security and foreign policy decision-making apparatus of the United States, said Ambassador Katherine Canavan, foreign policy advisor for U.S. European command.

Canavan set the stage for the conference by providing a 20-minute presentation outlining the political process used to move an idea, such as military construction, from funding to completion.

“...It takes a long time to get through our system the decisions that are made, especially those that require resources,” said Canavan.

Military construction is one of those areas where Congress is very interested in what is

being built, where and by whom, she said. That is why it is taking such a long time to get funding for new housing in Grafenwoehr, she explained.

During the meeting, participants referenced issues, which often drive negotiations, such as, noise complaints caused by military aircraft, extended hours permitted by the German government for live-fire training at installations, a lack of housing caused by the restationing of troops in the region, and proposed reduction or increase of forces, as part of Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission initiatives.

“Since the beginning of 2009 no more firing waivers were made,” said President Michael Brod of Bavaria’s Military Administrative District South (WBV-South). “This led to a considerable decline of the complaints because of shooting noise. Some complaints have been merely about aircraft noise of helicopters and jets from the region of central Franconia and Grafenwoehr. Still we continue to work through this.”

Brod said the WBV-South had approved firing waiver applications, which allowed extended training to take place after the normal firing hours at various locations, after special consideration. With increased operations and frequent deployments for Iraq and Afghanistan, units could request extended use of the facilities. However, since the beginning of 2009, no unit has requested a waiver, and no waivers were denied. Brod said he works to balance the needs of the community with the needs of the military.

Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar, commanding general of the Joint Multinational Training Command in Grafenwoehr, Germany, said he was impressed with the level of support and cooperation he had received since assuming command in late August.

“Our commitment to the Soldiers and to the unit is to provide very current, very relevant and very realistic training,” said Salazar. “The Soldiers at the JMTC could not do that without the support of the great communities in which we live. You all support those efforts.”